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An Aeroplane Elopement

Or, THE WINDS OF CHANCE

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CHAPTER I.

FATE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

WITH considerable of a flutter, and not unlike a wounded hawk with a broken wing, the biplane came tumbling to the ground on one side of the mountain. Karl Bennings, the young aviator, had apparently timed his jump very cleverly, for he managed to land feet foremost in a dense patch of bushes that acted as a sort of mattress, and thus broke his fall.

Immediately crawling out from this bed of vegetation, and unmindful of a few minor scratches that however brought a copious flow of blood, and gave him a gory appearance, he reached the open ground. Then he did a queer thing. Exhibiting all the symptoms of a badly injured birdman, he apparently tried in vain to gain his feet, wabbled about unsteadily, groaning very realistically the while; and finally fell over as though in a swoon.

It might have been noticed, however, had one been close enough to see, that the wrecked aviator managed to assume a fairly comfortable attitude ere yielding in this manner to the inevitable. Also, that occasionally his eyelids fluttered just a trifle, as though he might be taking a sly and surreptitious peep.

If he was expecting something to happen, he did not have a great while to wait. There was a hasty crunching of the bushes as some person pushed through, having undoubtedly seen the fall of the biplane from its low altitude above the mountain. What sounded like the swish of skirts also came to his ears, and this caused him to chuckle softly.

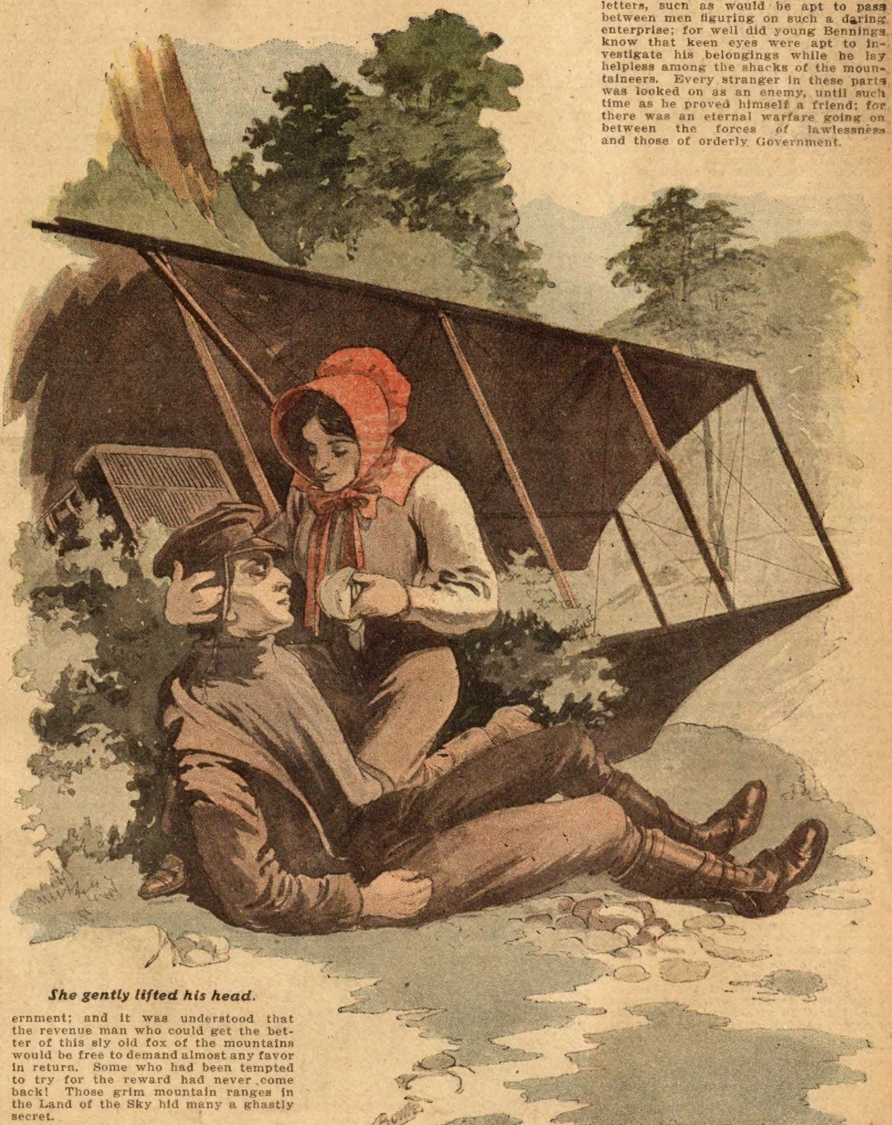
Evidently, then, Karl Bennings was playing some sort of game when he managed to drop with his air craft on this North Carolina mountain, so far away from the haunts of civilization. Truth to tell, it was all a part and parcel of a scheme that had been evolved in the brain of the young revenue officer, in order to obtain lodgment amid the dwelling places of the mountaineers without exciting their suspicions and hostility.

Although not yet thirty years of age Karl Bennings had seen considerable of an adventurous life. He had penetrated the forbidden zone of the Amazon and Orinoco country in tropical South America, as a hunter after rare orchids; and his success in this line had given him not a little fame and fortune. Later on he had joined the army of those who worshiped at the shrine of the new air craft, and had become known as one of the boldest aviators in the entire country.

Circumstances, and the pleadings of a warm friend who was in the employ of the United States Government, had combined to cause his enlistment among those brave revenue officers who take their lives in their hands while trying to outwit the wiles of the mountain moonshiners in several Southern States.

Here in this North Carolina region one particular man had defied the forces of Uncle Sam for many years. Everybody knew that old Luke Johnson had several secret stills in operation, and he had long made money from the sales of his illicit whisky. Possibly a dozen expeditions had been organized with the intention of finding out just where these stills were located, and perhaps catching the giant mountaineer in the act, so that he could be convicted. They all suffered the same fate; and in every case the officers were either waylaid in the mountains, treachery having told of their coming; or else, when they gained the place where they had information the still was in operation, it was to find a mocking sign staring them in the face, to the effect that they might as soon expect to catch a weasel asleep as the man they hunted.

So for many years had Luke Johnson defied the combined forces of the Government; and it was understood that the revenue man who could get the better of this sly old fox of the mountains would be free to demand almost any favor in return. Some who had been tempted to try for the reward had never come back! Those grim mountain ranges in the Land of the Sky hid many a ghastly secret.



She gently lifted his head.

And so Karl Bennings, looking for new fields to conquer, had been tempted to undertake the task. He was feeling more or less reckless and bitter at the time, it chanced, on account of certain personal matters that weighed heavily on his mind. And in the end he planned this make-believe tumble in his biplane, in order to lend color to his unintentional entry among the mountaineers. On his person he carried several clippings taken from a newspaper published in New York, telling of a big wager made between certain parties to the effect that an aviator could, or could not, pass over the mountains lying between Charlotteville in the Tarheel State, and Knoxville, Tennessee. This would make it appear that the wrecked flying-machine had been attempting to carry out the conditions of this wager at the time of his mishap.

There were also other papers on his person to the same effect; some of them letters, such as would be apt to pass between men figuring on such a daring enterprise; for well did young Bennings know that keen eyes were apt to investigate his belongings while he lay helpless among the shacks of the mountaineers. Every stranger in these parts was looked on as an enemy, until such time as he proved himself a friend; for there was an eternal warfare going on between the forces of lawlessness and those of orderly Government.

So far as he knew the tumble had been neatly accomplished. Karl believed that only one of the box planes of his biplane had been damaged, and this injury could be remedied by half an hour's work, given the opportunity. He was particular with regard to this thing, because he expected eventually to take his departure from this inaccessible region by the same method that had marked his coming. And, moreover, he even fancied that his going was apt to be somewhat hurried.

While he was moving slowly along, keeping as near the earth as he deemed wise, he had caught sight of some girl or woman who stood with sunbonnet thrown back, shading her eyes with one hand, and staring up at the strange monster that was navigating the air. And realizing that the opportunity for which he had been waiting was at hand, Karl had made haste to execute the deft drop he had planned. Undoubtedly it must be this same female spectator of his tumble who was now making her way swiftly to the spot, her soul filled with horror in expectation of finding a mangled body amid the wreckage of the machine.

Even in that minute of further waiting Karl found himself wondering because she dared make this advance alone, when most of her sex would be afraid to venture. He knew to a certainty that his was the very first aeroplane that had ever ventured to attempt the crossing of the smoky mountains; and that the people who had their habitations amid these peaks must have gazed in awe, and ever terror, at what to them had seemed like a gigantic hawk sailing through the ether.

Twice had the daring aviator been fired at during his trip; and he would never forget the shivery feeling that accompanied the whistle of bullets close by, any one of which, striking the rigid framework of the biplane, must have put it out of commission, and hurled him down through five hundred feet of blank space, to meet a terrible death on the rocks below. He even believed that a person who had seen such modern inventions many times could not be more ready to advance to the rescue.

But now the swish of garments became more pronounced, and Karl started to utter the most dismal groans of which he was capable; for he wanted it to appear as though he had fractured a rib or two in his fall, since they could easily discover that his limbs were not injured. A man could hardly have passed through all the troublous scenes that marked his past career of seven or eight years without having splendid control over his nerves. And it might also be assumed that such an adventurer must be able to act a part under provocation.

Now the woman was hurrying toward him, he felt sure, though keeping his eyes tightly closed. He could hear her saying low words to herself, as though the sight of a crumpled figure lying there, and possibly dying outright, appealed to her womanly sympathies.

The young aviator had his cap buttoned well about his head, after the manner of those who speed through the air in aeroplanes at the rate of more than a mile a minute, while gauntlets protected his hands; but despite these precautions those bushes had managed to scratch him in several places, for he could feel the pain of the wounds, and even feel a few drops of blood running across his cheek.

The newcomer took one look at him, and then turning, sped away. Karl, feeling chagrined, lifted his head to stare after her. Just then he saw that she had something white in her hand, and to his listening ear came the murmur of running water. Then what seemed to be the truth flashed over him. A mountain brook gurgled over moss-covered stones close by, and this Good Samaritan had conceived the idea that the cooling liquid would be most grateful to the wounded aviator. So she was intending to dabble her handkerchief in the rivulet, and lave his bloody face with the same.

Satisfied with the way things were working, and fearful lest some other person might happen by, and note his queer actions, he lay back again, and calmly waited to be resusitated. Later on he remembered thinking it rather odd that the woman—or rather the girl, for he had seen that she was slender, agile, and apparently young in years—should own such a thing as a kerchief; for if half he had heard about these mountaineers were true, such an adjunct to a lady's wardrobe was next to unknown among them.

But then, come to think of it, he believed some one had told him Polly Johnson, the daughter of the king-pin among the moonshiners, had spent some little time at a girls' college near Asheville, run by religious people of the North. Then this must be that same Polly; and he was about to owe his rescue to the only child of the very man he had come to hunt down. That seemed a very satisfactory ending to his apparently dangerous fall; and as he lay there Karl was secretly complimenting himself on the way fortune chose to treat him right in the start of his adventure.

He could hear her returning, and even made up his mind just how he should groan as she started to move his head, in order to wipe away the blood stains, and cool his fevered brow. Well, if so be it should prove that the ministering angel was old Luke's daughter, there was some satisfaction in remembering how more than one person had informed him that Polly was something of a good-looking mountain girl. If a fellow has to be rescued, it must be much nicer to have the Good Samaritan a pretty maiden than an ugly old crone, or a swarthy, suspicious swain.

She apparently dropped down alongside him, and bent over. He had turned his face the other way purposely; and her first act was to lift his head gently so that she could turn it toward her, and get in some work with that wet kerchief.

Two, three little dabs she made, and somehow the touch of her fingers seemed to give the revenue man the queerest tingling sensation possible; indeed, for a newly professed woman-hater, he ought to have been ashamed to lose control of his feelings just because a strange girl chose to lay her fingers against his cheek.

Then he heard her give utterance to a bubbling cry of astonishment. She must have succeeded in removing some of the dirt and blood that stained his face, and caught a good look at what lay below. Something about that cry thrilled Karl beyond words to describe. Forgetting how he had risked his very life in order to play a part, he allowed his eyes to open, and stared up into the exceedingly pretty face that was bending over him, with a pair of hazel eyes wide open with wonder, incredulity, and, yes, even joy!

Could any one blame the young aviator for doubting his own vision, when he thus found himself looking into the liquid orbs of the very girl, Pauline, who only a year back had promised to be his wife, and then had vanished from his sight in the most mysterious manner possible, leaving only a note to tell him that circumstances had suddenly arisen that would prevent her from ever keeping the vow she had taken to change her name to that of Mrs. Karl Bennings?

CHAPTER II.

A MINISTERING ANGEL.

"Pauline!"

The name broke from Karl's lips, even though policy would have dictated that he remain mute until it became apparent what the girl might do and say.

She started at hearing his voice.

"Oh! then you are not dead, dearest; tell me that you are not going to leave me? When I saw you fall, and hurried here to be of help, little did I suspect that I would discover in the unfortunate man-bird my Karl!"

The girl was softly patting his scratched cheek as she murmured these words, possibly hardly knowing what she did in her hysterical condition.

"No, no, it is not so bad as that," he hastened to declare, and was about to struggle into a sitting posture when suddenly he remembered that he was bound to carry out the part he had assumed; so he lay quiet, and went on to say: "But what sort of miracle is this, that I find my long lost Pauline here in this wilderness where I have fallen at the risk of my neck? How terribly cruel you have been to me, darling, to disappear in that mysterious way, and never send me a line of hope."

The girl was no longer white, for her face had taken on a scarlet hue; and she seemed to feel the hot flushes that chased each other across brow and cheeks, for she half turned aside as she replied to his reproaches.

"Believe me, Karl, it was for the best. I have suffered even more than you ever could; because I knew the shame of it all, and that almost overwhelmed me."

"Shame?" he echoed, half starting up, whereupon she hastily went on:

"I had, without warning, learned who I was, when the aunt who had reared me was taken sick. Before she died she told me all, and that my father was expecting to have me come home to him, because his second wife had gone, and there was no one to look after him longer. My father, Karl," and she made a brave effort to say it steadily, although her voice quivered, "my father is no other than Luke Johnson, the most notorious moonshiner and law breaker in all the North Carolina mountains!"

No wonder Karl remained silent. A dozen things were rushing through his mind at lightning express speed. After all, it was not so strange that the one he had known as Pauline should in this wild region be known as Polly Johnson, the moonshiner's daughter.

He shuddered, for with other things there had come upon him the recollection of how he was at that moment in this region, bent upon bringing disaster upon the very man Pauline claimed as her father! But he must dissemble, for her bright eyes were fixed upon him. Fortunately there seemed plenty of reasons why he should look puzzled and anxious.

"You astonish me, Pauline," he said, slowly, as though drinking in her declaration with difficulty. "You, Polly Johnson, of whom I have heard so much while preparing for this flying trip over the mountains? And you did not dream of such a thing a year ago, when we were sweethearts, did you?"

"My own mother died when I was born, and I was given into the care of a maiden aunt who lived in Wilmington and who raised me, as you know. My aunt was ashamed of the notoriety her brother had brought on the name, and religiously kept the truth from me up to the time she felt that her end was near. My father had just written to her, telling that his second wife was dead, and how lonely he felt; he begged her to let me visit him. Somehow, when I read his letter, Karl, I felt drawn toward him, and my duty came clearly before me. I could not face you, and tell you the truth. That was why I disappeared, Karl; and only for this chance meeting you would never have known the reason I gave you up."

Forgetting that he was supposed to be a sorely wounded man Karl caught hold of her hand; the old fever was upon him, since the sight of her face awakened the passion that had burned in his heart.

"But you have not ceased to love me, darling; deny it as you please, I can read the truth in your eyes, in your blushes, in the quiver of this dear little hand. Now that I know the worst, I may refuse to give you up again. Fate has brought us together in this remarkable way for a purpose, and that means you still belong to me. Our vows of long ago still hold true. No matter who your father may be, I shall claim you as my promised wife. You hear me say it, Pauline?"

But even as he spoke the words Karl felt a shiver pass through his frame. It was not because of his wounds, though doubtless she immediately thought that to be the case, for she showed renewed concern—he had again remembered what his pledged mission to the mountain country was; perhaps that would assume the proportions of a greater obstacle to their union than anything in the past.

Suppose that he succeeded, and dragged her father to prison. Would such an undertaking be apt to influence Pauline in favor of his suit? He had given his solemn word to abide by the rules of the Secret Service Department of the Government; and now he had to choose between stern Duty on the one hand, and Happiness on the other. No wonder then he groaned, only to feel her eager eyes fastened upon him, and her caressing hands touching his burning face.

"Oh! you may be injured far worse than you believe, Karl!" she exclaimed.

"No, no, it cannot be serious," he muttered, perhaps unconsciously following out the plan he had so carefully arranged until he knew it by rote; "only a rib or two at the most, that will keep me quiet a little while. Perhaps if you would put your arm around me, darling, I might be able to get on my feet; for I suppose I must go somewhere, as I can't stay here all night."

How delightful it was to feel her arms around him, as she only too willingly obeyed his request. Karl wished that he could only forget the mission upon which he had been sent, and remember merely that he had found his Pauline, and that perhaps he need never lose her again.

"You must come with me to our cabin, which is not far away, Karl; but please do not let my father suspect that we have ever met before," she said, as he managed to get upon his feet, drawing long breaths, as might one who suffered internal pain; and making wry faces, while he shut his teeth hard together with what seemed to be a determination not to betray any weakness.

Under ordinary conditions he would have eagerly welcomed such an invitation, as it would give him just the chance he wanted to spy upon the giant moonshiner, and learn his secrets. Somehow it seemed different now, and he almost shrank from the task; because she was a member of the home that was under the ban of the Government, and every blow aimed at Luke Johnson must hurt his only daughter!

It was a decidedly unpleasant predicament for the young revenue officer; and quite as unexpected as it was sudden. For the present therefore, he knew nothing might be done save carry on his prearranged plans, and let the future look out for itself. At any rate, he might continue to bask in the company of the girl who filled his heart, and that was worth something. So he flung all else to the four winds of heaven, and determined to accept the favoring winds of chance as they blew haphazard from every quarter, trusting that in the end all might be well with respect to Pauline.

"Before I leave here, I must look at my machine, to see what damage has been done," he said. "Perhaps, if it is not too badly injured, I may come back and patch up that broken wing; for I have yet four days in which to make Knoxville on a wager."

He could not look her in the face while making this statement, knowing how false it was; but hobbling painfully over to the biplane that lay helpless on the side of the mountain, he appeared to be anxiously examining it.

The girl, who was dressed in homespun, and yet showed by her manner that she was by reason of environment and education far superior to the ordinary mountain maid, followed him anxiously. She seemed to be oppressed by a constant fear lest he overrate his strength and powers of endurance; and appeared ready to clasp her arms about him at the first symptom this way.

Perhaps a new hope had taken possession of her sorely tried heart. Had she not just heard her Karl declare vehemently that, now he had found her again, nothing should come between them? Could he accept her even after knowing that the girl he had loved in the past was but the humble daughter of a hunted moonshiner?

"It is not so very bad after all," declared Karl, as he completed his anxious examination of the aeroplane. "I can easily fix that plane again; and the engine, thank goodness, did not receive the least injury. So perhaps I may be able to finish in the time limit after all, if only my hurts turn out to be superficial."

She insisted on helping him along, and indeed, how could Karl decline the proffered aid, when his whole being thrilled at the touch of her hand?

Presently they came to what seemed to be a well defined trail, leading along the side of the mountain. Then smoke was seen rising beyond, evidently coming from the chimney of some cabin that sheltered a mountaineer's family.

"Please do what I asked you, Karl, for a time at least, and act as though we were total strangers, when my father is near," she had said, as though in some way dreading to have it known that they had once been lovers.

"I'll try, Pauline," he had answered, "though it must be hard not to betray my love in every look I cast in your direction. If your father is not blind he will soon discover that there is a bond between us. Perhaps it would be better to confess the truth in the beginning, dearest."

"No, no, give me time to think it over, Karl," was her answer.

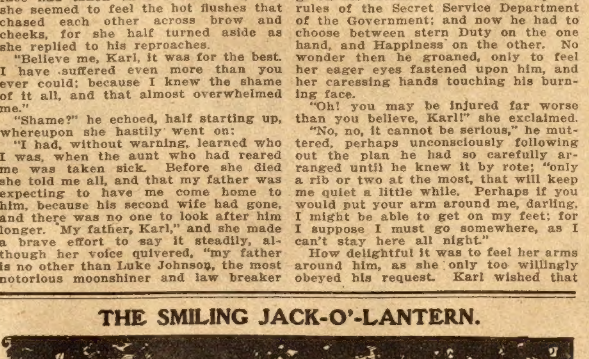
He must not know that the main reason for her saying this was a desire to ascertain how he took the gruff old mountaineer whom she was acknowledging to bear the relation of father to her. Should she discover an involuntary shrinking on Karl's part, a feeling of repugnance which he could not conceal, then it must be a question of love and duty once more with Pauline.

"Be careful now, Karl, for there comes Jack Lawson along the trail. He must have seen us from a distance, and is consumed by curiosity to know who it is I am helping along," the girl observed, suddenly.

Karl had already discovered a tall young mountaineer hurrying toward them. Something about his manner excited suspicion immediately. It would not be strange if so pretty and sweet a girl as Polly Johnson had stirred the hearts of more than a few young fellows in the region where she so suddenly dawned upon them and almost instinctively Karl believed that this Jack Lawson must be looked upon as his rival.

"Lawson," he repeated after her; "it seems to me I've heard that name be-

THE SMILING JACK-O'-LANTERN.



All in the dark upon a gate
Beside a cedar tree
A jack-o'-lantern sat alone
And smiled a smile at me.

At first when I discovered him
It gave me quite a fright
To see his gleaming eyes shine out
So brightly through the night.

But when I saw his pleasant smile
It made me glad and gay.
I knew he must be kind and good
To smile in such a way.

fore. Isn't his father supposed to be almost as well known as Luke Johnson? There is a Lawson who is said to be very rich for one who lives in the mountains."

"That is Phin Lawson, Jack's father," the girl said, hastily; "they have more money than any one else, and live in the finest house for twenty miles around. But secretly they are no better than the rest; though Phin has been a money lender all his life."

"And what is this Jack Lawson to you, Pauline; I hope he had not taken my place in your affections, dearest?" Karl went on, frowning.

"No, no, do not think that for a minute," she answered, instantly.

"Still, he claims to care for you—I can see him scowling even from here; and the way he carries that rifle tells me he is suspicious of this stranger you are helping along. Has he ever told you he loved you?" he asked in a masterful tone.

"Yes, that is true; but I am afraid of him. If Jack Lawson were the last man on earth I would go unwedded to the end of my days before taking him, believe me, Karl," she went on, and he could feel her shudder.

"But he persists; he is not the kind of a man to give up a thing easily, when he's set his heart and soul on it; am I not right, Pauline?"

"Yes, it is just as you say; but even when my father tried to influence me into accepting him I absolutely refused. Since that time it has been like an armed truce between us. I treat him coldly, and he just glowers at me when we meet. He is coming from our cabin now, but please say nothing more, Karl, for he might hear us. Make out to be just what you claim you are, a stranger who came near death, and whom I happened to be able to assist."

"I will dearest, for your sake. Watch and see how well I play my part," he whispered; and straightway fell to groaning with every step, as though in great bodily pain.

In this manner, then, they met the tall mountaineer who was hastening along the path; and Karl could see that jealousy and suspicion had been awakened in the soul of Jack Lawson by the way in which he scowled on the stranger, as well as the nervous grip he kept on his repeating rifle, without which these sturdy men, whose homes were in the Land of the Sky, seldom went abroad, since vendettas abounded, and they were always expecting the coming of bold revenue officers.

CHAPTER III.

THE EYES OF JEALOUSY.

"Who's this feller, Polly?" asked the mountaineer, as he blocked the way, and looked askance at the aviator, whose odd dress must have astonished him not a little.

"He was in the aeroplane that fell on the side of the mountain, which he was trying to cross," answered the girl, readily.

"Yuh means that ere flyin' airship we seen shoot past a little while back?" and Jack Lawson's look of astonishment took the aspect of something akin to awe; since the very idea of any one spinning through the air at the rate of a mile a minute, like a great hawk, was appalling to the minds of those who had only heard of aeroplanes, and never had the chance to set eyes on such wonderful creations.

"Yes, that was it," Pauline hastened to say. "I happened to be close by, and as I have seen such things before at Wilmington, I was afraid he might have been killed by his fall. But fortunately it was not so bad as that. The poor fellow has evidently broken a rib, or something of the sort, and must be taken care of for a time; though he declares he means to go on shortly, as he has made a wager to pass over the mountains to Knoxville."

She talked in this strain for a double purpose. In the first place it gave her a chance to explain why she was assisting the stranger along; and then again it must serve to calm the suspicions of Jack Lawson. She was thinking only of his naturally jealous disposition, and fearing for the safety of the man she loved; because, of course, Pauline could not have the faintest idea regarding the true nature of the mission that had brought Karl into the mountains.

"Here, let me do the helpin' part, Polly," said the tall native; but Karl understood exactly the motive that prompted him to take her dear arm from around the waist of the stranger, and place his own muscular one there.

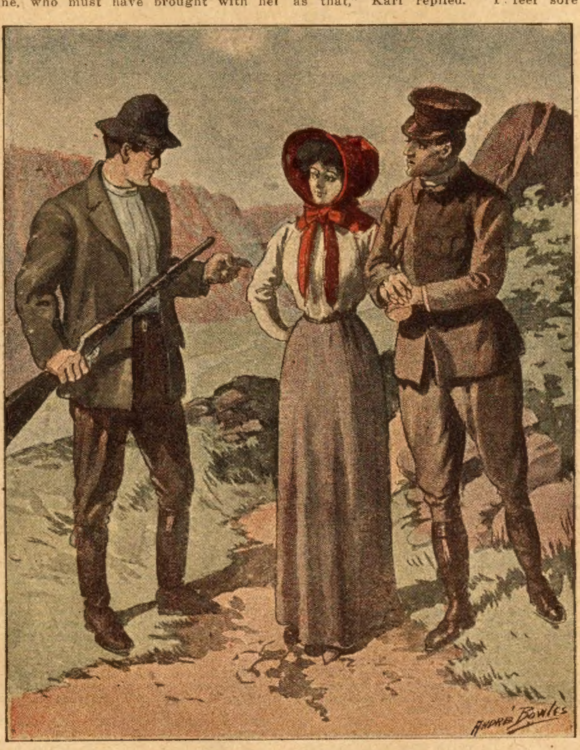
It was rank jealousy, and not compassion. Jack could not bear the sight of the girl for whom he cherished so consuming a passion, brought so close to one whom he now discovered to be quite a handsome young chap. To be sure his arm proved much more dependable than that of the girl; but all the same Karl mentally deplored the substitution. He could have willingly gone on right along leaning upon Pauline, and never once complained.

The girl went on ahead, as though not wishing to show too much concern over the condition of this stranger; for she knew how keen are the eyes of hate and jealousy, and a sudden new fear lest Karl come to harm possessed her soul. Karl continued to utter an occasional little grunt, as though in pain. He knew that now the die was cast he must continue to play the part he had mapped out, no matter what followed. That the strong, strapping young fellow at his side felt something like contempt for such an exhibition of weakness, he realized from the way in which Jack sneered.

It was a strange fix for any one to find himself in—being sustained by the arm of one he knew to be his bitter rival; going to the cabin home of the notorious moonshiner whom he had come to hunt down; and with the daughter of that same Luke Johnson the idol of his heart! Complications threatened to arise erelong calculated to make things fairly warm for one Karl Bennings, he was fain to believe. How it would all turn out he could not even imagine; but hoped for the best, and was determined to carry himself bravely through it all.

Now they sighted several cabins ranged along the trail at little distances from one another. Karl had seen hundreds of similar humble mountain homes throughout the South, and especially in the mountainous regions. Primitive they were, without a single luxury, and almost entirely lacking in what most people are accustomed to looking upon as the absolute necessities of life.

One log cabin seemed to be much larger than the rest. Instinctively Karl knew that this must be the Johnson home. Flowers grew here and there alongside the building, doubtless planted by Pauline, who must have brought with her some of the love for beautiful surroundings so natural to the dwellers in towns, but so unknown to the mountaineer families, content with their abject lot.



" Who's this feller, Polly? "

Two men were sitting on a bench outside the door of this cabin. Women could be seen in little groups, evidently discussing excitedly the marvelous vision that had recently flashed by, when the humming of the aeroplane motor had drawn them all out in mad haste, under the impression that a miracle had been wrought, and one of those gasoline wagons of which they had heard, was coming up the mountain road.

A minute later and Karl found himself the center of two dozen curious cabin dwellers, who stared at his queer attire as though they looked upon him in the light of a stranger from Mars, accidentally alighting on the earth. Indeed, he might almost have been such a celestial visitor in the minds of these humble people, since he had sailed through space as though given wings from the gods.

Karl had on difficulty in immediately deciding which one of the two men must be old Luke Johnson. It needed not that Pauline should go up to him, and begin to explain what had happened to the injured man; the size and appearance of the notorious moonshiner must have told him the truth at a glance. Johnson was a giant to begin with; and besides, his rugged face was fashioned along the lines that mark a natural born leader of men. The square jaws, the keen gray eyes like those of the eagle that loved to soar upward toward the blazing sun, and the whole characteristics of the man, indicated one who would never give up to the bitter end.

And doubtless the young revenue man realized in that moment the magnitude of the task he had taken on his shoulders. Many had attempted it before, only to confess abject defeat. He could well believe the stories he had heard respecting the enormous strength and will power of this giant of the mountains.

Whatever Pauline may have said to her father, it seemed to have convinced him that the duties of mountain hospitality must be extended to this stranger whom a peculiar freak of fortune had cast from the clouds almost at their door. When he came forward he immediately spoke to Jack Lawson, telling him to help the wounded man inside, and have him placed on a cot, so that his injuries might be attended to. This Jack did with but an ill grace. Evidently he scented new trouble in connection with his boisterous wooing, should this good-looking stranger be lodged under the Johnson roof indefinitely.

"Don't seem like yuh got a leg er arm broke, stranger," said the giant, as he dropped down on his knees beside Karl, after the latter had been helped to the rude pallet in the living room of the big cabin.

"No, I'm glad to say it isn't so bad as that," Karl replied. "I feel sore about the body, and when I draw in my breath it seems to hurt me a whole lot."

"Sho! then I reckon as how yuh jest gone an' got a rib er two busted," the big mountaineer went on, as though desirous of reassuring the other. "Been thar myself twice, an' nawthin ever kim of it. They knit agin' given time; though chances air, yuh might feel that sore way right along till three months gets by."

He took off the cap and jacket worn by the aviator. Pauline was watching her father's face with intentness. She might be endeavoring to read his opinion of the strange young man, in the hope that he would be favorably impressed, and not interpose a parental objection when he later on learned the truth as to the relations existing between his daughter and this newcomer. For several minutes, then, the mountaineer felt of the patient, and Karl kept his wits enough to know when to groan as the finger of the crude physician poked him inquiringly in the region of his lower ribs.

"That's all as ails yuh, stranger," declared the other, finally. "Nawthin' tuh skeer yuh. Recokon how yuh'll jest hev tuh take it easy like, a while, an' go slow 'bout climbin' that ere buckin' air hoss o' yourn. My gal, she uster live down in Wilmington, yuh see, and she done told me a heap 'bout these heah things, though I ain't seen one afore today."

"It's mighty kind in you telling me that, and in taking me in your home this way, thanks to the young lady here; who found me where I fell with my machine. Are you her father, may I ask?" Karl went on to say.

"Jest so; tho' p'raps yuh wouldn't believe it," grinned the giant. "We ain't much on hevin' company in these parts, stranger; but when they come tuh droppin' down out o' the sky, it'd seem hard tuh refuse tuh house 'em. My name's Luke Johnson; mebbe so now yuh might a-heard it afore?"

Karl instantly puckered up his lips as though inclined to give vent to a whistle, and in this manner indicate his astonishment. The action spoke louder than any words could have done. It told that he had certainly heard that name before, and was surveying the possessor of it wonderingly, as though stunned at the odd fate that had dropped him right at the door, so to speak, of the most noted moonshiner in the Smoky Mountains.

When Karl planned his clever little scheme he had never dreamed that he would have to stand the battery of a jealous lover's eyes, as well as those of suspicious moonshiners. There was big Jack Lawson standing near by all this time, fairly devouring him with his gaze. Let him once have the slightest idea of the truth, and there was apt to be a lynching bee celebrated; or at least a tar-and-feather party, to which he, Karl Bennings, would be an especially invited guest.

Some of the others had pressed inside the cabin, filled with curiosity to see the daring bird-man who had tried to cross the summit of the Smoky Range with a pair of huge wings, just as though he were an eagle. These now began to ask questions of Karl; and desirious of creating as good an impression as possible among them, he answered the best he might. Nor did he forget to wince every time he moved a little, as though a sudden acute pain had shot through his system. At such times he could see Pauline shiver, and her eyes fill with new alarm; so that his conscience pricked him, in that he was compelled to give her pain while thus following his prearranged plan.

Indeed, there seemed nothing for him to do but continue to carry it out, just as he had laid his course. He was now in the tiger's lair. If these lawless mountaineers ever learned his true identity, and that they were harboring one of the hated revenue men, his life would not be worth the snap of his fingers.

By degrees men and women passed out. Pauline was doing her best to influence this exit, believing that the wounded man needed rest; for of course she knew no better than the balance of them, and fully expected that it would be weeks, perhaps months, before Karl found that pain in his side leave him.

Jack Lawson was the very last to go The tall man showed by his actions how loath he was to depart, and leave that dashing-looking stranger located under the roof that sheltered the woman he so passionately adored, in his rough way. When he bent over Karl just before leaving he looked him straight in the eye, and managed to say in a low but suggestive tone:

"If so be you kin ride that flyin' bug ag'in inside of a day or two, best get away from this region, suh. I'll promise to keep the boys from handlin' the machine, so as you'll find her just as she lays now, when so be you want to vamose. It mout be a good thing foh you to win that bet!"

Karl knew what lay beneath these apparently friendly words, for the flash in Jack's savage orbs told the story. Some subtle intuition had told this rough man that his courting of Polly was placed more in jeopardy through the fall of the young aeronaut, than it had ever been before. Perhaps he may have seen something in the actions of the lovers that told him the truth, even before Pauline detected his presence in the trail.

But finally even Jack went out, and when the giant moonshiner followed a little later, bent on some errand, or business, Karl found himself left alone with the object of his adoration. He half raised himself on the cot, and held out his arms toward her, as though mutely imploring that she come to him. It was at this moment that he saw her press a warning finger to her red lips, and with a gesture call his attention to the window that was open. And Karl, glancing that way, caught sight of a shadow that betrayed the presence of a spy crouching beyond the opening!

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOONSHINER'S CABIN.

Of course it was Jack Lawson who crouched without, hoping to hear something calculated to either convince him of the truth, or set his newly awakened fears at rest. All was fair in war or love, according to the notion of the rough moonshiner. And being thus warned in the nick of time, before he had said a single word to convict himself, Karl started to play his part as a stranger to the mountain maid.

He asked her numerous questions about the country; and every little while kept remarking that he hoped he would be able to continue his voyage through the air in time to win the wager he had made with a friend. In the course of his talk he even went so far as to mention Jack Lawson, and state how much gratitude he felt toward the tall young man, because he had promised to guard his precious aeroplane, so that no injury might befall it.

Well did he know that this resolution on the part of the eavesdropper would be strengthened by hearing this sort of talk. If guarding the biplane, and keeping the curious natives from carrying away parts of the same as keepsakes, would hasten the departure of this dashing-looking stranger, Jack would see that a cordon of his friends surrounded the machine every minute of time.

Tiring of this espionage finally, Karl requested the girl to please get him a drink of fresh water. Just as he supposed, his words were overheard by the man who crouched under the small window; for there was a rustling sound, such as must indicate his hasty withdrawal, in fear lest he be discovered in this ignoble position by the girl he adored, and was determined to possess.

When Pauline came back presently, with a bucket filled with cool water from the spring, he saw that she was smiling.

"That started him going, did it?" Karl asked, cautiously.

"Yes, he was far down the road when I got out, heading for the spot where you fell. But do you really believe that he will guard your aeroplane, and why?" the girl asked, as she handed him a gourd containing the fresh water.

"Because nothing would please Jack half so much as to see me sail away aboard that same aeroplane; unless it might be to watch me turn turtle when half a mile up in the air," he answered, giving her a suggestive nod, and a smile, as he drank heartily of the cool liquid.

"Oh! can it be possible that he suspects already?" she murmured, as though deeply concerned.

"I don't know," Karl went on, seriously. "It may be only the intuition of a man madly in love that tells him he has much to fear from me. You have thought that you disguised your feelings carefully, dearest Pauline, or shall I say Polly now; but he may have caught a light in your eyes that was visible to him alone. However that may be, his action in hiding under the window betrays the state of his feelings. I shall have to watch Jack pretty sharply all the time I'm here, I imagine."

"I saw one of the men take some papers from your coat," the girl went on, hurriedly; "when you were not looking. I hope they are not valuable, and that he will return them. He made a motion to my father when he went out; and I'm ashamed to say I believe they must be together even now, examining his find."

At that Karl chuckled. "Yes, I knew it, though I said nothing," he admitted. "But never mind, dearest, they are only copies of my wager, and the conditions under which I must work in order to win out. Doubtless, when they have satisfied their curiosity, they will return the papers, which are of no value to any one save myself. I'm not going to bother my head over them."

She sighed as though relieved, never dreaming what reason her lover had for being satisfied; since those papers had been manufactured expressly for the eyes of the moonshiners.

"Tell me something more about these Lawsons, now," he went on, as though desirous of becoming better posted. "It seems to me I was told there was a sort of mountain vendetta between the Lawsons and the Johnsons; and that in years gone by many on each side had paid the debt of Nature by being shot from ambush. Then how does it come that this has all been wiped out?"

"I can soon explain that," she replied, and he noticed that she persisted in keeping close to the open window, as though not meaning to take chances again of a listener creeping up outside to overhear what was said.

"Please do so then; and I can suspect that this feeling young Jack has in your direction may be one of the causes. But proceed, Pauline, dearest."

"Yes, that was one of the reasons why my father and Captain Lawson decided to call the many-year-old feud between our families off. They sort of expected that the families might be united, if only I would take Jack; though none of them ever heard me give him a single word of encouragement; for I have always disliked him and even feared him, and his staring eyes make me shiver. But you see, he is the only son left to old Phin Lawson, and I am the only child of Luke Johnson. They somehow began to hope to bridge over the gap in that way; but it can never, never be."

Of course, as a lover, Karl was pleased to hear such words. At the same time he knew stormy times were undoubtedly ahead for himself and Pauline. Even had he not undertaken such a gigantic task as was involved in the discovery of the secret still of the moonshiner, so that an expedition could destroy the same, and possibly capture the owner at work, there was enough of peril in this threatening attitude of Jack Lawson.

Presently the girl warned him that her father was coming back, and relations between them were once more changed to the normal. The old man came in shortly. Karl thought he looked at him rather hard as he entered; but every precaution had been taken to make the papers appear regular; and there could surely be no reason why anything about them should invite suspicion. Could Jack Lawson have met the old moonshiner on the road, and inoculated Luke with some of the feeling that seemed to animate himself?

Karl proceeded to play the part he had laid out. He seemed content just to lie there and doze, while the big man smoked in his chair, and Pauline flitted back and forth preparing the evening meal, since the day was drawing near a close. Several times some neighbor would make an excuse for dropping in, just to get another look at the bold air navigator, whose coming had created the greatest sensation that had convulsed the mountain region since two years back, when the last pitched battle between the Johnson clan and the Lawsons had occurred, with numerous fatalities on either side.

When the supper was ready Karl was assisted to sit up; but it was the owner of the cabin who gave the aid of his strong arm in order to bring about this change of position, and not the girl, as the young fellow had hoped might be the case. When the man sat down at the table, Karl noticed that he had taken a position where his eyes could cover the cot at the side of the livingroom. And from this fact he judged that he would have to be constantly on his guard, lest by some little act he betray his secret, and let it be prematurely known that he and Polly Johnson had met before his advent in the mountain country.

Of course his appetite was not supposed to have suffered simply because they guessed he had a broken rib or two. And the food that Pauline had prepared certainly tasted just fine to him, as it always must to an ardent lover.

Now and then old Luke would address some remark to his guest. As a rule this was in the shape of an inquiry, as some new point connected with this mysterious navigation of the air appealed to his inquiring mind. It was a decided novelty, this having an aeronaut under his roof; and apparently Luke wished to get all the information possible out of the event.

There were times, however, when Karl had to be very careful about his replies; he even found himself suspecting that perhaps the moonshiner had a deep motive back of some of the things he asked, as though he hoped to spring a surprise, and trip the aviator up.

Finally Luke got up and went out, without saying a word as to where he might be bound. Karl noticed that he first lighted a common lantern; also that he threw his gun over his shoulder. But then, no doubt such action had become second nature with Luke; since from his early years his family had been at loggerheads with others, and mountaineers seldom leave home without carrying arms.

While peace may have descended upon the clans of the Lawsons and the Johnsons, after that famous burial of the war hatchet between Luke and Captain Phin, at the same time old habits were apt to cling fast; and a man accustomed to feeling a rifle barrel nestling close up against his cheek would find himself lost without the familiar sensation.

Karl found himself looking after the other more or less wistfully. The girl noted that expression, and of course misconstrued it; for she believed that what was passing through the mind of her lover just then must be a longing to make friends with her father, and so gain his consent to their union. Truth to tell, at that moment Karl was wishing he could sneak out, and follow the giant moonshiner to his destination; since he felt confident that old Luke must be heading for his secret still, to carry on the work that had been his pet project for many years—that of defying all the forces of the Government. However, he dared not make the attempt as yet. It would of course excite the apprehension of Pauline, and might lead to immediate complications.

He writhed a little at the thought of her learning the truth, and that his coming into that wilderness community, where no revenue man had ever dared penetrate, and lived to tell the tale, had not been in the nature of an accident at all; but a part of a clever and bold plan calculated to bring woe to her own father.

Really, Karl found himself in a bad fix. If he won out as an agent of the Government, it probably would be to lose his sweetheart, since so proud a girl as Pauline would never wed with the man who sent her own father to penal servitude. On the other hand, to win the girl he must prove a traitor to his trust; and this prospect galled him exceedingly. Up to now Karl had been very jealous of the Bennings honor. It had been his boast that no one of that name had been known to betray those who believed in his word.

Still, there were several days ahead, and somehow he kept hoping that something might come up during that time to show him a way out. Deep down in his heart he was conscious of an abiding hope that if one of the two possibilities had to fail, it would leave him his sweetheart. And even though he might be debarred from much love making, by the character of the perils by which they were surrounded, at least he could enjoy feasting his ravished eyes on her delightful face, at such times when the jealous and tall mountaineer, Jack Lawson was not around. The thought of that glow in Jack's black eyes made Karl uneasy.

"I'm going to have trouble with that fellow, sooner or later; I just feel it in my bones," he muttered to himself more than once, as he lay there watching the nimble fingers of Pauline fly back and forth with her knitting.

Now and then they fell into a little conversation that was along just such lines as would appear natural. If Karl felt impelled to say something that was in his heart, he made sure to lower his voice to a whisper; and at such times Polly would pretend to be very sober as she simply shook her head. For the girl was, truth to tell, very nervous, and cast frequent uneasy glances toward the opening used as a window. She had heard of more than one case where some man was shot down in cold blood through a window, by some unseen enemy without. The people of these mountains had summary ways of carrying out a death pact.

That set Karl to speculating again; and with the dark scowl that had marked the strong features of young Lawson fresh in his mind, he was of the opinion that, given a cause for his action, the tall mountaineer would not hold his hand when tempted to wipe a supposed rival or enemy from his path.

Following up this thought it was only natural that Karl should presently make a chilling discovery. This was to the effect that the girl had purposely moved her chair, so that she was sitting directly between the cot he occupied and that same open window! He could easily guess her reason for so doing. She would purposely interpose her precious form between the man she loved and any lurker who might choose to hover, murderous rifle in hand, outside that opening!

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this fine story. You will find it interesting to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

Halloween.

Whether our ancestors of Colonial days did the frivolous things on Halloween that are done in this day is not a matter of record, but certain it is that they indulged in festivities in which the beautiful dances of a hundred years ago played a prominent part. In this, our day, the festival is celebrated most often with pranks more or less foolish, and with the efforts of the unmarried of marriageable age to look into the future for solutions of some of the problems of life—generally for a peep at the identity of the husband-to-be.

Halloween keeps itself so conspicuously in the public eye each year that All Saints' Day, with its unique customs, is passed over without a thought by the general public in the United States. And yet it, as well as Halloween, is picturesquely celebrated by the creoles of New Orleans in the fashion of their forefathers in France, and likewise by the Filipinos in our new possessions.

Indeed, there is a close link binding Halloween, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. The first is the name given to the night of October 31, as the eve or vigil of All Saints', or All Hollows' Day. Of all nights in the year this is the one upon which supernatural influences most prevail. The spirits of the dead are supposed to wander abroad, together with witches, devils and mischief-making elves. In some cases the spirits of living persons have the supposed temporary power to leave their bodies and join the ghostly crew. Children born on this day preserve through their youth the power to converse with these airy visitants. But often the latter reveal themselves to ordinary folk to advise or warn them. Hence it is, according to tradition, the night of all nights for divination. More important still, it is the best time of the whole year for discovering the identity of one's future husband or wife. This fact, more than any other, keeps interest alive in Halloween.

One of the curious English customs of All Halloween or All Saints' Even, as it is called by some of the early writers, is building a bonfire on rising ground. This is a relic of Druidism. When the fire burns out, the ashes are collected into the form of a circle. This is edged by stones, one being placed by each member of every family interested in the fire. Should a stone be moved or broken by the next morning, the person represented by that stone is doomed to die within the year.

In Ireland magic ceremonies are celebrated around these fires, to counteract the influence of witches and demons, and to enable the young to prognosticate their success or disappointment in the matrimonial lottery.

Afterward there is feasting. Apples and nuts are devoured in abundance. The nutshells are burnt, and from the ashes many strange things are foretold. Hemp seed is sown by the maidens, who each believe if she looks back she will see the apparition of the man intended for her future husband.

These superstitious practices, the remains of Druidism, are almost as popular today among certain classes as they were among the Irish maidens in the long ago.

The young may begin the ceremonies of Halloween as a jest, not believing in the consequences, but underneath the merry exterior is the half hope that "there may be something in it."

One of the most interesting experiments of the present day is to pare an apple—it must be a pippin, by the way—then hold the paring by one end, swing it over the shoulder and let it drop. Any well-regulated apple paring will form itself as it falls into the shape of the initial of his name. Others may not see the initial, but the girl will be able to recognize it at once.

More trying on the nerves is the next test, but it is reasonably certain to produce results. The girl or man who would read the future must take a candle and go alone into the darkest, loneliest room of the house. He or she must look into the mirror. By the flickering light of the candle the future wife or husband is almost certain to be seen peering into the mirror over the shoulder of the seeker after hidden knowledge.

Perhaps the most poetic test of all is made when the guests have all departed and the girl is in the privacy of her own room. It is to ascertain whether or not her lover is faithful. She plucks two roses with long stems, names one for herself and one for him, then goes at once to her room without speaking to any one. There she must twine together the stems of the two roses and repeat the following lines, gazing intently on her sweetheart's rose:

Twine, twine and intertwine,
Let my love be wholly mine.
If his heart he kind and true,
Deeper grow his rose's hue.

If her lover be faithful the color of his rose will grow darker and more intense.

There are many cases on record of roses that have changed their hue. But in each case it is only fair to say the only witness was the person most interested.

The Lonesomest.

The desert waste is not the loneliest place,
Nor the mid-ocean, nor the mountain's crest.
Ay, these are lonely spots for men to face,
But not the loneliest.

One feels alone amid the bustling crowd
Of strangers, in strange cities, too—but not
So much alone, though Silence shrieks aloud,
As in one lonely spot

I know of. 'Tis the place you've visited,
Once with a Loved-One—sometime, anywhere
And visit once again when years are fled
And that One is not there!

* * *

Full of Experience.

Here is a story that the movement for good bridges has revived: A man applied for a job in a nursery. "Do you know anything about grafting?" he was asked. "Well, I'll admit that I know something about it," said he. "I was county commissioner the year we let so many contracts for bridges."

* * *

It's easy for a man to forgive his enemies after getting square with them.

The Lost Multimillionaire

Or, *ADVENTURES IN OSSABAW* :=: By E. W. BATEMAN

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CHAPTER IV.

WHEN I awoke the sun was streaming in my face, a bright late autumn sunshine that warms, but does not oppress. I lay still for a moment, drinking its cheerful ness and collecting my scattered wits. But the awful night just passed seemed like a bad dream that memory refuses to retain. So I lay there for a moment thinking of nothing except that my worn body was comfortable and that I wanted to sleep again.

I was just dropping off to sleep, when I heard soft footsteps outside my door; then it opened gently, and an old negro stepped in the room and looked at me. He evidently thought I was asleep, and turned to go, but I called out softly:

"Good morning, uncle."

What is it that we true children of the South put in our voices that the old, ante-bellum negro recognizes and responds to? Some say that it is but force of habit for these old servitors to serve. But it goes deeper than that. They love in us what they loved in our fathers before us. And it was this heritage that made us friends that morning, and I am proud to say that this friendship has never been broken. But I am wandering.

When I spoke a joyful grin spread over his face as he answered: "Good mornin', suh, good mornin'. I hope you res' well, suh."

"Quite well, uncle. And how is my friend?"

"Why, suh, dat boy am scan'lous well. He wus a settin' up in his bed an' a-cussin' for breakfus' when I call him. But de chile am quality, suh, just like you."

I could not repress a smile, for had Red heard this he would no doubt be edified, for he was four years my senior, and a sage in wisdom, when it came to knowledge of the world.

I was fully aroused by now and looked curiously around the room. It was a big, high-ceilinged affair, after the Colonial model, and furnished with mahogany that would have made a collector of antiques rave.

"Uncle, to whom are we in debt for our shelter? And is this the mainland?"

"Why, suh, you all is owin' to my young mistis, Miss Mary Marshall. And dis am de Marshall seat, suh, on Ossabaw Island."

And then the old man launched forth on a narration of the wealth, position, and "de quality" of former generations of Marshalls and the absolute and superlative beauty and good qualities of the present and only scion of the race, the mistress Mary. How for many years she had actively overseen and held together the Marshall estates, now but a shadow of its former glory. How she had nursed an invalid father from her girlhood, had given up everything that is dear to youth, living a life of loneliness and self-sacrifice. And a strange feeling of admiration, mixed with pity for this beautiful girl began to steal over me, and I wondered how she had lived through it.

Lost in reverie, I did not notice that the old negro had finished and stood expectant. When I did notice him his face was so questioning that I laughed outright.

"What is your name, uncle?" I asked.

"Tom, suh."

"Well, Uncle Tom, I'm a mind-reader. And to prove this weighty statement, I am going to read your thoughts."

"Aw, honey, go on 'way from here," he said skeptically.

"Yes, I am; you are wondering how I got here and what I am doing here, and also if I am going to tell you."

The old negro's startled look betrayed him, and then he grinned with me. Then I told him the strange story of our coming, and the silent homes he had passed the night before. All during the recital he had been quiet until I told him of the deserted houses, and then an exclamation burst from his lips. When I had finished he stood in dumb thought until I questioned him.

"Uncle Tom, can you answer a few questions?"

"Yes, suh."

"What is the meaning of those deserted houses?"

"Strange doin's, suh, strange doin's. But dar now! Young Miss don' tole me to say nothin' 'tall 'bout dis to you alls."

"Why, Uncle Tom? It does not touch the family, does it?"

"No, suh, not 'zactly."

"Then you must tell me. I know there is something dead wrong when people leave their homes as these are left. Out with it."

"Very well, suh. It's dis way, to begin at de beginnin'. It's been a hard year on us, down dis way, and de Sea Coas' niggers has cotched the worse of it. Dey am no farmers, suh, an' more 'an usual come to the house a-beggin'. Well, to make a long story short, 'bout a week ago, one of the fiel' hands comes to lil' Miss wid a long tale 'bout a pow'ful 'sturbance 'mongst dem. Seems if he could kinder mix wid dem; anyway, he tole how dere wus a man what tole dem he were the Secon' Messiah, suh. Yes, suh! tole dem dat he done come to take dem all 'way to Heaven. An he say dem niggers is just wild. Dat 'sturb me, suh, so I tole lil' Miss. An', suh, we don' been sendin' dat nigger 'mongst dem every night, and he bring some most terrifying news; how they gathered from far and near, from all the three islands; how he told 'em not to hunt an' fish, but to prepare demselves by fasting, for de ascension. Well, suh, dey did. De day for de ascension was de day befo' yesterday. Well, suh, co'se dey didn't ascen'. Dat day dey starved; yesteday, dey killed their Secon' Messiah and stole all de cattle dey could fin'. But, suh, what few little beefs scattered roun' didn't go far wid two or three hundred hungry niggers, an' dey families. Yesterday, suh, every nigger an' poor white man on dis island done lef' lil' Miss an' me by ourselves. Today, we is at their mercy. But, Mars' John is too sick to be moved 'round de house, much less to be took over to de mainlan'. Today, suh, dem niggers will be a-robbin' an' a-burnin'. Today, and I hates to think what's gwine to happen when dem niggers gets to us."

Those last sentences brought me out of bed with a bound. So this was the mystery of the empty houses. The few white and negro tenants had deserted the islands and their humble homes for the safer mainland, leaving these two and an old negro at the mercy of hundreds of starving savages.

"My clothes, Uncle Tom, and tell Mr. Sanders that I wish to see him," and I fell to dressing hurriedly.

I noted that the old negro had cleaned my clothes and shoes while I slept, so that they looked fairly respectable. I had just finished dressing when Red entered, and while I completed my toilet, I related to him the strange tale the old negro had just told.

"A typical case of 'out-of-the-frying-pan,' eh, lad?" he said, when I had finished.

"If ever two mortals had such luck, it isn't in history. But this last proposition is a facer for me."

"We must go down and consult with Miss Marshall at once. She may hold the key to the situation."

And together we went down the stairs and into the sittingroom. It was tastefully furnished and the windows, thrown open to the sunshine, overlooked the lawn on the front and well-kept flower garden on the right. All was bright and cheerful, and little was there indeed that hinted of the danger that surrounded it.

We had but a few moments to wait before Tom, with many a scrape and bow invited us in to breakfast. And I was a little curious to go, as I had a hearty desire to see the mistress of the house; for my sight of her the night before was but a fleeting memory. And so with this thought in my mind we were ushered into the dining-hall. And there, ah, there! Well, as Red afterward put it, "I fell for her at once."

Seldom is it accorded to the eye of man, a fairer sight than this maid, standing at the head of the table, with a half-smile of welcome. The dark brown hair, deep violet-eyes, the reddest of lips, and her skin the delicate tint of the early rose. Small wonder, then, that I was enchanted and stood rooted to the spot, until I heard Red speaking, and then I came forward to be presented? For an instant I held a cool little hand in mine, and the formal introduction over, we were seated at the table.

Then Red and I fell to valiantly, for it had been, it seemed, countless hours since I had tasted food. And food it was, too. A good old-fashioned Southern breakfast, and we did justice to it, but between mouthfuls we managed to tell the story of our strange coming. In all it was quite a merry breakfast party, Miss Marshall and I laughing most of the time at Red's numerous flings at the "two knights of Ossabaw," as he had early dubbed us. And while the meal progressed, my wonder and admiration of this strange girl grew. How could she sit, calm and collected, as if she were hostess to two old friends, instead of a couple of derelicts, and as though no danger was then lurking at the very threshold of her home?

The tale was told and breakfast finished before any reference was made to our situation, and then after a moment's silence I spoke.

"Miss Marshall, if our coming here is strange, the predicament we find is simply astounding."

Then, in answer to her look of surprise, I continued: "I made Uncle Tom tell me why those homes were deserted, and of course the whole story had to come. If you give us the details of it, we will try to do what we can to stave off any disaster."

"It is certainly alarming, gentlemen, to say the least, and it has bewildered us, for we have never had the slightest trouble with the Ogeechees. To start with the year has been hard on them, and they have superstitiously attributed it to a curse sent by God. For a month or more the negro laborers have been bringing tales of religious rites that bordered on voodooism. Then a week ago came the climax; one of the field hands who I suspect is one of them, came to Uncle Tom with a weird story of a Second Coming of the Messiah among them. But I very foolishly laughed at it as one of their fanatical dreams, and sent him about his work. Two days later Uncle Tom again brought him to me, with tales of their wild orgies and that the day after would be the day of Judgment and that the Ascension of the Chosen would follow.

"I was apprehensive by now, and told him to watch them closely and to report anything new. Of course the Ascension did not come off, and that evening, just after dark, the negro returned badly frightened, and he told how a horde of savages, crazed with emotion and disappointed had wreaked their vengeance on the one they thought had betrayed them. I immediately sent Uncle Tom to warn all the white and negro tenants, who are on the island, and invited the whites to bring their families to our home, so that if the worst came, we could find safety in numbers. As a reward for my trouble," she adding in laughing scorn, "they hid their livestock in the swamps as best they might, and left at once for the mainland. Yesterday not a soul remained but our household. Late yesterday afternoon, Uncle Tom went to the lower pasture for the cows and found the fence torn down and the cattle driven off. Today we know not what to expect."

"Then we must be up and doing," I cried. "They may be drawing in upon us now."

"I don't think they are so bold—yet. I sent Uncle Tom out at sunrise, and after an hour's ride he returned without seeing any of them. But, gentlemen, before we decide any plan of action, I wish you to meet my father. He deeply regrets that he is not able to greet you as he should, but a fall he received years ago has since confined him to his room. Tom," she called, "tell father, that we will be up directly."

A few moments later we followed her up the stair and into the room, where at ease in an invalid chair lay her father. I knew the instant I stood before him that I was in the presence of a great man. Perhaps not as the world measures greatness, but according to the words of him who has said, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." He was not far beyond fifty, yet his years of suffering had aged him considerably. Yet from his deep gray eyes there shone the light of an immense will power, and a cheery smile as he acknowledged the introduction proved that his affliction had not destroyed a good disposition. He was, indeed, truly great, and it is always with pleasure that I remember my first meeting with Colonel John Marshall.

"You see, gentlemen," he said, laughingly, introductions over, "I got wind of the small bickering you all are expecting, and though I'm not fit for active service I utterly refuse to be left out of the council of war. But first, sirs, comes my duty as host. We have ample means for you both to leave the island, and it will be naught but wisdom for you to go. Shall we order a boat made ready?"

"Colonel Marshall, we were both born in Georgia," I replied, and the look of relief on the girl's face made me very glad I said it.

"I was sure of it, sir," he said, gravely, and then in a lighter tone, "I had a remarkable story from Tom regarding your advent in the island, but I think many of the facts were enhanced by his active imagination. Would you mind relating the story again?"

With ready acquiescence I told him the tale briefly.

"And now, it is my turn, Colonel Marshall. Have the negroes ever been stirred to this extent before?"

"No, sir; that is, not to an open outbreak. In fact, we see very little of them at all, as they live in the swamps to the north of the island."

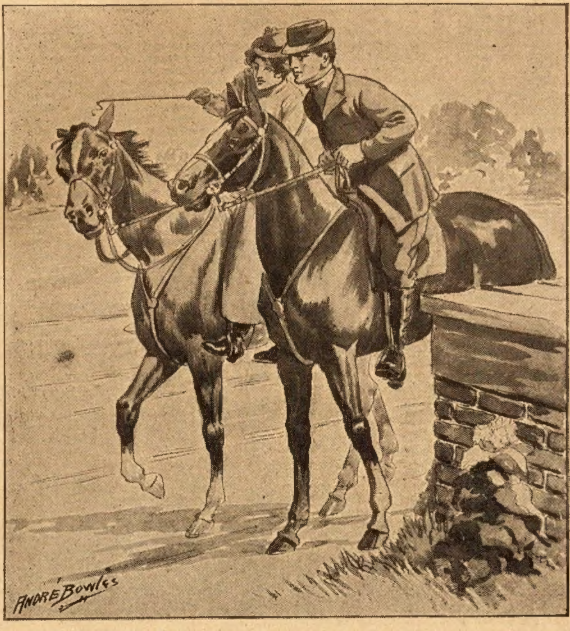
"Are they voodoo worshipers?"

"Not in the least, sir. They are intensely religious, but they take the Bible very literally. They have been known to practice all manner of sacrifices after the teaching of the Hebrew tribes. And though few of them can read, it is surprising how they know the most familiar parts of God's teaching. But as I said they sadly misconstrue them. And now that this false Messiah has come among them, their faith has been badly shaken, and it will take only a few jugs of 'pine top' whisky to unbridle the restrained savagery of two hundred years. And then——" He left the result unspoken.

For a moment's time no one spoke, and then Red broke the silence. "Is there no way to summon help, and crush the rioting before it is begun?"

It was Miss Marshall who answered. "We have had an excellent example of what we may expect of the whites in this section. The nearest town is twenty-five miles inland. No, indeed, we may expect nothing from them."

"The soldiers at Fort Screven!" I exclaimed. "We must get a message to



"Can you see that bend in the road?"

them. Surely there must be some way."

"Impossible, sir," answered the Colonel. "Savannah is fifty miles by water and farther by land."

"Have either of you any knowledge of motor-boats?" asked Miss Marshall suddenly.

"No," I answered, wondering at the irrelevancy of the question.

"I have had a great deal of experience with them," answered Red.

"Then the problem is solved," she said joyously. "Several weeks ago a party of hunters came up from the city and were forced to put in to the island on account of motor trouble. But not any of them were experts and they only made matters worse. And when the owner came up to the house to borrow a rowboat, he swore by all the pagan gods of history that he would never return for it. So if you can fix it——"

Red Sanders was always a man of action. "Lead me to the boat," he said.

CHAPTER V.

No one at Marshall Manor thought of dinner that day. Red had immediately pressed Uncle Tom into service, and Miss Marshall drove them down to the landing. I sat and chatted with the Colonel until she returned. As she entered the room laughing, a deeper color in her cheeks from the brisk drive, it's no wonder that I caught myself staring at her. "Jimmy, my boy," I thought to myself, "you had better make your heart behave itself." And then aloud, "How is Red getting along with the boat, Miss Marshall?"

"Quite famously, I think," she answered, "He is greasy from head to foot already, and calls things awful names, I've never heard before. Uncle Tom is simply aghast at 'dat 'streperous boy.'"

"My dear, Mr. Williams and I were just discussing the firearms available, and we find the supply is far below the demand. In fact, there is but one rifle in the house," and he pointed to a huge Winchester that hung on a rack near the door.

"Now, dad," answered Miss Marshall, with an adorable pout, "please don't start a lecture about modern rifles. Mr. Williams, he thinks that you must have a gun that shoots a pound of lead at every shot, or it isn't worthy of the name. He doesn't consider my own 30-31 at all, while I think it is the nearest perfection of any gun ever made. I'm going to get mine, and we'll decided the question by popular vote," and she left the room.

I stepped over and swung the Colonel's rifle off the rack and raised it to my shoulder. Strong as I was, it was something of an effort, and I shuddered when I thought of stopping a 45 caliber bullet hurled from this mighty instrument of death. And I was just thinking regretfully of my own rifle packed neatly away in its case at home, when Miss Marshall re-entered the room, and extended her own gun to me.

I could scarcely repress a cry of delight.

"Miss Marshall, this is like meeting an old friend!" I exclaimed, as I cuddled that 30-31 under my chin and sighted down the shining barrel.

"Who advised you to buy it?"

"Who, indeed?" she answered laughingly. "I bought it as a result of my own experience, sir. But, honestly, don't you think it is much better than that baby cannon?"

"Colonel Marshall, yours is a lost cause," I said.

"Oh, well, children have a way of becoming so fond of toys they actually believe in them," chuckled the Colonel.

"But that still doesn't provide enough guns. What are we to do?" queried Miss Marshall.

"I have it, Miss Marshall. I'll ride down to the houses of the tenants and do a little second-story work. Perhaps I may find all that we need."

"A very good idea, but lacking in one detail. When Mr. Sanders and Uncle Tom come in, we will ride down," she answered. "I'm to return for them about two o'clock, and it is nearly that now."

"Miss Marshall, how many cartridges have you for your rifle?" I asked.

"I ordered a case with the gun and have used but a few out of them."

"Very good, indeed. But the other rifle, Colonel Marshall?"

"I'm afraid the supply is very slim, yet I think there are a hundred or two that can be used. They are in the gunroom."

"I must be going," said Miss Marshall, "and when I return we will go on our pillaging expedition, Mr. Williams."

"I will go down and see you off," I answered. "I wish to look around the house and see what methods of defense we can use to the best advantage," and we went down the steps and out to where Miss Marshall's horse stood tied. In a moment she was gone, and I was standing alone gazing at the landscape.

The front of the house could be easily defended, as it commanded the road and the lawn and there were no woods near that would afford anything like protection. The only danger lay in allowing them to gain the trees that stood near the house. Satisfied, I went around to the rear of the house. It also had many natural advantages of defense. One man in the kitchen and one in the diningroom could hold it against any number of ill-armed savages, who were poor shots at best. If they dared attack the house, a few fatalities among them would soon drive them off. And a few moments later I rejoined the Colonel, and we fell to discussing the topics of the day.

And thus engaged, it was not until I heard the voices below that I realized that it was time for the return of Miss Marshall and Red. I hastened down the stair and out on the porch, just as they got out of the buggy.

"Mr. Sanders is a mechanic par excellence," she said. "You just ought to see the miracle he has performed on that grouchy engine. You would not believe it."

"Then you can make the trip if you are obliged to?" I asked, eagerly.

"Surest thing you know," answered Red. "There was nothing radically wrong, and I fixed it in time for Uncle Tom and me to take a trial trip while wating for Miss Marshall; and lad, that boat has thirty miles an hour in her if she has an hour."

"Uncle Tom, saddle my horse, and put father's saddle on the black," said Miss Marshall; and while we waited I explained to Red where we were going and why.

"It would be wise for us to take your rifle, Miss Marshall," I finished.

"Certainly. I will be back in a moment," and she ran up the steps and into the house.

Suddenly I remembered that Red had been raised in the city, and turned to him in terror.

"Good Lord, Red Sanders! I forgot to ask you. Do you know one end of a gun from the other?"

Red drew up his full five feet six and looked me over.

"Young man, the circumstances alone prevent my spanking you. I was killing time and Gugus in the Philippines before you were out of a prep. school. Know one end!" and he doubled up with a howl of righteous laughter.

Uncle Tom came up with the horses and I swung up.

A moment later Miss Marshall came out clad in a riding suit, and smiling as though she was going out for a ride, instead of the perilous mission that we were on. Only the rifle under her arm lent any sign of danger, and Red and I stared in open admiration at the beautiful picture she made, while Uncle Tom was open in his complacence. She was not unaware of it, for she blushed, and I looked quickly away and cursed myself for a cad. Red helped her mount, and we were away in a gentle lope. When we reached the road we quickened the pace, and were covering ground rapidly.

Miss Marshall silently relinquished the rifle and was riding with face averted. For a moment I feared that stare at the gate had wounded deepr than I thought, but the next instant I banished it. She was too well-bred, too pure and whole-souled to feel anything of the kind. A moment later she certified it.

"Mr. Williams, what is woman's besetting sin?" and she laughed deliciously at my sudden start.

"Curiosity has the call over all others, I've been told," I answered, in the same spirit.

"Well, you have a poor feminine at your side, who is fairly consumed with it. And then more seriously: "Your coming has awakened me. I was asleep, content. But now I want to know what the great world around me is doing. Not the silly superficial things that you see in newspapers, but what real men and women of today are concerning themselves with."

And while we rode more slowly, I told her of the new books, the latest paintings and inventions that had made the world gasp at Anglo-Saxon genius, how our great statesmen were making history, and how railroads were making empires. And as she listened with rapt attention while I talked, a wave of feeling swept over me, and I knew that I loved this maid, not alone for her beauty, but for the nobleness of the soul that God had enthroned within her. Here was she, born and reared on the outskirts of civilization, yet with a soul and an intellect that called for the things in life that were noblest and achievements that were highest. And then for some minutes we rode in silence, both thinking deeply. She spoke first.

"Mr. Williams, I cannot tell you how much I thank you for this favor, for you have helped me to awaken that part of myself that has been asleep—ambition. Is it wrong for me to wish to play a part in the affairs of the great world other than living a life girdled by the waters around Ossabaw Island?"

"I would be an unreasoning boor not to assure you that it is not. If the call of the world for good men is great, the call for good women is greater." And I could not help but add, "And you would quickly find your place and your work to do."

She bowed her head gravely and a moment later she laughed. "Enough of air castles, sir. We are very much on Ossabaw Island now, and it looks as if we are going to find it exciting enough before we get off again. Yonder is the first house; a race, sir!" And together we raced to the gate and pulled up.

I sprang to the ground and helped her dismount, and we went up on the rude porch and tried the door and windows and found them securely fastened. Miss Marshall started to say something when I hit that door on the run. Cheap locks were not made to stand football tactics, and the door flew wide open. I stepped inside and made Miss Marshall a low bow. "Where there's a will there's a way," I quoted.

"But think what an awfully interesting burglar you would make," she answered, "When the family rushes out to escape an earthquake, they find a Mr. Williams in the hall, who courteously informs them that he wants the family silver."

The house was quickly searched, but we found nothing that resembled a gun. It was but a moment's work to remount and we were on our way to the next house. It was but a few moment's ride, and we were before its door. It received a similar fare to the other and we were searching the house over in some haste, as we were a trifle later than we had expected to be. We had given up hope for this one, too, as there remained but one small room. I threw open the door, and hanging over in one corner was a modern repeating rifle. My cry of exultation brought Miss Marshall behind me, and together we simply gloated over it as if it was some priceless treasure.

Then I took down the hunting sack and handed it to her. "Look and see if the cartridges are there. I haven't got the nerve," I said.

She thrust her hand into its depths and brought out a handful of the little death-cylinders. Without speaking I took the sack and slung it over my shoulder, and we went out and mounted again. I turned my horse in the direction of Marshall Manor.

"There is still another house," said Miss Marshall.

"But we can't use another gun," I answered, "and we are already in the enemy's country. Hadn't we better go back.

"No, indeed. It would be awful if they procured a good rifle, for we would lose our advantage over them. We must search the last house.

It was good logic and we rode on. It was quite a distance to the last house, and we had passed all signs of civilization. We alone broke the pall of wilderness thrown over this strange land. We said little as we rode, and when the house was reached, the gloom of it depressed even Miss Marshall.

I hurriedly smashed the door, and in the front room we found another rifle and its attendant stock of cartridges. Miss Marshall gave a little smile of triumph as her opinion was vindicated. We were anxious to be gone, so we went through the other rooms hurriedly. But it was unnecessary, and we were out to our horses in a moment. I handed Miss Marshall her own rifle and was busy strapping the other two to my saddle, when suddenly I heard her catch her breath and suppress a cry. In an instant she was by my side.

"Don't move," she whispered. "Can you see that bend in the road?"

She pointed to where the road took a sharp turn. I thought I saw something move there and I watched. In a moment a negro stole across the road.

"There!" she exclaimed. "There goes another." And we stood there in plain view and counted twenty as they followed one another across the road.

When we were sure they had all passed I took the first breath I had drawn for hours, it seemed to me.

"What does it mean?" she asked in a low voice. "Not one of them was armed."

"I cannot explain it. They were certainly intent upon something or they would have surely seen us."

"Then let us follow them. We can lead our horses, and I know every foot of ground in there. I am sure this is something out of the ordinary."

"Impossible!" I exclaimed. "It would be suicide to attempt it."

"Then, you are afraid, Mr. Williams?" she said, coldly, but with a rising inflection that left it a question.

"If you put it that way, I guess we'll follow them." I answered; "Will you let me go alone?"

"No."

Without a word I filled the magazine of the rifle I held, and we went forward, leading the horses. A moment later, and we plunged into the woods and were surprised to find a well-worn trail.

"They were going to some meeting place," said Miss Marshall, and I nodded. We were obliged to go single file now and Miss Marshall was leading. For five minutes we tramped steadily on, when suddenly Miss Marshall held up a warning hand. I was beside her in an instant and she said:

"Right ahead of us is a deep hollow that I've always suspected was a meeting place of theirs, and now I know it. We'll go in, but very slowly," and we moved on at a snail-like pace. Fifty yards further and I could see the natural basin that she had spoken of. We were fairly crawling now and making little sound. Yard by yard we crept closer to the hollow, until only a few feet remained between us and the edge. I tied the horses and crept to the edge, where a strange sight greeted us.

There below us, assembled as if in church, sat the twenty we had counted. In front of them was a huge rock, and they sat facing it as if it were a pulpit. And even as we lay there, from behind the rock sprang a giant negro and mounted it. He was a marvel of a man, and though past middle age was as muscular and powerful-looking as a man of thirty. And then he commenced speaking.

Well, to use a hackneyed term of the press, "the audience was his from the start." He was, of course, using that strange jargon of the Ogeechees, and I could not tell what he said. But the effect on his audience was unmistakable. They groaned and writhed in their seats, and uttered those deep, throaty sounds that have been and always will be, unintelligible to the white man.

Suddenly he stopped speaking, and two of the crowd came forward, and passing behind the rock, stooped and raised something which the other received in his arms. He wheeled quickly around, and he held in his grasp a man, slight and frail, dressed strangely in an ill-fitting white tunic, torn and bedraggled. But it was not his dress that amazed me. Though a heavy beard concealed the lower part of his face, and his skin was tanned by wind, he had the unerasable signs of the Caucasian race!

"A white man!" I gasped.

"It is their false Messiah?" she whispered back. "They are trying him now. They did not kill him as I heard."

Again the negro was speaking. But his manner was changed, and he was urging them to something. His pleading, impassioned words came forth in a sonorous stream, and his audience rocked and groaned in unison. Higher and higher rose his voice, and his audience sprang to their feet.

"Come," whispered Miss Marshall.

We crept back to our horses.

"Mr. Williams, I can tell something of what he was saying. He is urging them to make a sacrifice of this man, and then drive all the whites off the island and establish an ideal government. And they are going to follow him."

"Miss Marshall, I am a white man and he is, too. I could never look my fellow men in the face if I stood idly by and let him die such a death. I'm going down there after him."

"I cannot blame you, sir," she answered, in a low, strained voice.

"Then listen. Let us mount here and ride as close as possible to the brink of the hollow. Then I am going to ride straight in the midst of them and out again. When I start out you must clear the way with your rifle. And if I don't come out——" I extended my hand, and we shook hands gravely.

Their voices had risen into a wailing chant with the speaker thundering along above them all. Straight to the brink we rode, but they could not hear us. Then, for an instant I paused, gathered my reins tightly, and gave my horse a vicious cut. The big black shot forward with a start that nearly tore me from the saddle, and down that hill we went like a rocket, straight into the midst of the council!

For a moment the negroes sat petrified with surprise at this apparition that shot suddenly down from the sky.

This powerful story will be concluded in the next week's Ledger. Do not miss reading it. A lot of great and timely stories will appear in the Ledger during the coming months. Send in your subscription and you will find yourself repaid ten times over.

* * *

The Alexander Band.

It was a great day in the history of that small town. The currents and crosscurrents of politics had swirled up and down the main street, made enemies throughout the community, and led the most prominent citizens to make foolish bets on the election. Patriotism was playing thunder with men's preconceived notions of the dictates of politeness. The merest whisper would have precipitated the use of firearms and hatpins. The speaker of the day took his place on the platform, looked as wise as a treeful of owls, and prepared to sweep the crowd right off its feet. He began with a reference to his noble candidate, who full of patriotism, ambition, and a desire to get the salary, was willing to have himself elected.

"How Alexander wept for worlds to conquer, you, most of you, may all know," he began, but was interrupted by an offensive-looking person, who let out this discouraging comment:

"If we don't, we must be crazy. God knows we've been told about it often enough."

* * *

The Contrary Wife.

A tambourinist had so contrary a wife he could never get her to do anything he asked. One day, on their way to a wedding at which he was to play, she was riding an ass and carrying his tambourine, and he cried out, as they were fording a river: "Woman, don't play the tambourine, for you'll frighten the ass." No sooner said than she began thrumming; the ass, shying, lost its footing, and threw our dame into the river while the husband, however much he wished to help her, could do no good. Seeing she was drowned, he went upstream in search of her body.

"My good fellow," said a lookeron, "what are you seeking?"

"My wife," he replied, "who is drowned."

"And you are looking for her upstream, friend?"

"Oh, yes, sir, she was always contrary."

The Taxicab Robbery

Or, Celebrated Detective Achievements of Jack Spence, Reporter

By George T. Hargreaves

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CHAPTER VII.

COOPED IN BY FIRE.

DID you ever almost drown? Did you ever feel yourself sinking with no helping hand near? Did you ever hold your breath under water as long as you could and then be forced to open your mouth and let your lungs fill? Did you ever gasp and choke and strangle as the water raced into your throat? Did you ever feel your strength oozing away, a strange calmness settle down upon your struggles, a creeping blackness come over your mind?

I had all these sensations after I had been pitched into the water by the taxicab bandits. I had more; for I was still tied hand and foot, and jerk and twist as I would, I could not free so much as a finger or a toe. I was just forced to lie supinely and realize that the water of the river was closing over me forever. Yet my thoughts weren't of myself. They were set on Gertrude—that dear girl who would be left to unknown perils through my mysterious taking off. Of course I loved her. Maybe I hadn't admitted it to myself before. But now, with death so near, I gave myself the one last satisfaction of confessing that she would have been the one woman in the world for me—that in all my varied experiences, among all the women I had met in all sorts of walks in life, she was the only one to shake up my heart—the only one that I was willing to admit I'd like to be able to call my wife.

And now I was losing even that chance. Dully I felt the water closing more deeply over me. Calmly I lay with the blackness in my brain growing denser and denser until of a sudden mind became a blank.

I came to stretched out on the deck of the police boat. I was so weak I could not move a finger. My mind was so tired that I just wanted to close my eyes and fall to sleep. My lungs were sore as if racked by an enormous weight. I could hear faintly the gruff voice of a man standing over me:

"I wouldn't have give one shake of a dead man's leg for this fellow's chance when we hooked him aboard. He must have a pair o' lungs like a copper-bottomed boiler to hold all the water that ran into him and not to bust."

I was too weary to smile, too tired even to open my eyes in gratitude. But when they had carried me into the engineroom, broken off all my shackles, and poured a quantity of reviving liquor down my throat, I was weakly prepared to submit to their bombardment of questions.

I didn't tell them all I knew, or half of what I suspected. They recognized me as Jack Spence, reporter, and they got the idea that my escapade had something to do with running down the taxi thieves. So they plied me with questions till I bluntly told them I wouldn't say another word. They were sore enough that my three captors had made a successful getaway, though they insisted they must have sunk.

I didn't propose to have them report my discoveries to headquarters and then allow some other newspaper to get in on the glory. That wasn't what I had faced death for at least twice that night. I'm not particularly stuck on myself, but I believe in grabbing all that's coming to you.

They let up on me when they saw I wouldn't open up any more, and I had a minute or two to straighten out some of the kinks in my brain. My thoughts flashed intuitively to Gertrude. My own perils pressed in on me the conviction that she had undergone some of her own. I made it my vow to hunt her as soon as my feet touched land.

You can bet I was sore at myself. Although I had got a corking good story and had undoubtedly solved the mystery of the taxicab bandits, I had failed in the most important point—I had failed to capture them or to recover any of their booty.

My head was full of schemes to complete the roundup of the crooks I had started out to get. I wasn't forgetting, either, that the booty had been divided now—that "Scar-face" Hitchens and a pair of his worthies were gloating in the possession of some of the "dough." I'd sure have to run them down before I could call my job complete. But my first duty was to Gertrude Hawthorne.

So when, after searching back and forth on the rippling blue-black river for some trace of the daring bandits, the police boat put back to shore, I lost no time in starting out for the house on Twenty-first street where I had been foolish enough to leave her earlier in the evening. I was wet and bedraggled, but I didn't mind that. Life was worth far more than mere looks. And I never was much of a dandy, anyway.

A car took me from the pier to the street I wanted. I hopped stiffly off, paying no attention to the inquiring eyes that followed me. As I turned to look east along Twenty-first street, the clang of a fire wagon's bell as the apparatus dashed along halted me. A newspaper man always has an ear open for that kind of a sound.

Two long blocks away I could see a gathering crowd in the street and the swirl of a black cloud of smoke from an upper window of a red brick apartment. I found myself digging my fingernails into the palms of my clenched hands as I saw that the place afire was close to where I had parted with Gertrude.

Weakened and weary as I was, I broke into a run. A block away I could hear the roar of flames. Breathless, I stopped a moment. Then I ran faster than ever as I beheld a pillar of fire leap from the roof of the very building the girl I loved had entered.

I'll repeat it again. I loved Gertrude. I'd loved her all along, ever since that tragic night when I had seen her thief of a father die miserably, and realized that it was my bitter pursuit of him that had brought him to his wretched end and made an orphan of her. But up to this night I'd never admitted my feelings toward her—even to myself.

Now, however, I could almost feel my heartstrings snap as I plunged madly forward with the presentiment that she was in the gravest danger. I loved her better than myself, for I pulled up in front of the flaming structure vowing that I'd save her even if I perished myself.

The firemen were carrying out the insensible figure of a woman. I dashed through the lines the police had spread to keep back the pressing crowd. I looked into the white face of the unconscious form. I breathed in relief when I saw it was not Gertrude. But I was in an agony of doubt the next moment, for the woman slowly opened her eyes and weakly cried:

"There's a girl left behind on the third floor. She's locked in."

No one needed to tell me that "girl" was mine. I knew it as well then as I ever knew anything in my life. I plunged toward the first floor doorway, out of which a cloud of thick, black smoke was spasmodically belching. A policeman, then two firemen tried to catch me to hold me back. But I eluded them.

"Fool!" I heard one of the fire laddies cry after me. "Nobody can live in there. You'll suffocate to death ten feet inside."

But I didn't heed him. Moreover, I had my wits working again. They usually stay close by me when I need them. I remembered my clothing was still dripping wet from the bath in the river. I slipped off my coat as I dived into the hallway.

As I thrust out one arm to grab the stair rail, I used the other to wrap the moist coat about my head. Despite the heavy smoke and the increasing heat, I found I could breathe with some freedom and striking the foot of the stair I began to clamber slowly upward.

The heat grew more intense. I could feel it withering the flesh of my hands. But the pain was not so harsh as that in my heart as I recalled the direful words of the woman who was just being carried out:

"There's a girl left behind on the third floor. She's locked in."

As I reached the second floor landing, I could hear the crackle of flames. They seemed all about me, even steaming my wet attire. But I staggered on. I stumbled as I reached the foot of the stairs that led to the third floor and sprawled headlong. The wood was afire and I had barely regained my feet and dragged myself up a few steps when I felt the burning boards crumble. And as I reached the top, I heard the whole stairway fall in with a crash that sent up a shower of sparks and flame all about me.

Unheeding, I felt my way along the wall until I reached a door. The knob turned easily, and I opened the door and, slipping through the aperture, slammed it shut behind me. Breathing more freely, I cast off my coat from about my head and found myself in a large bedroom. Neither fire nor smoke had yet invaded it, but I could hear the vicious crackle and roar of flames both above and below.

I glanced out of the window into the seething street. Blood-red fire was oozing from the windows just below me and great banks of black smoke splashed with dashes of crimson were heaving upward overhead. The firemen were trying to raise an extension ladder, but the apparatus had clogged and a moan of anguish sifted up from the throng of spectators as they beheld my face at the window and saw that aid for me was balked.

But I did not stand long a witness of the frantic efforts of the firemen to reach the window where I stood with their ladder. I had other work. And it needed to be quick work, too, for as I turned I beheld the smoke seeping beneath the closed door, and when it touched me I found that it was almost as hot as flame. But I didn't mind even that. My mind was still filled with that ominous message:

"There's a girl left behind on the third floor. She's locked in."

A quick glance revealed a closet door. I rapped but got no response. I turned the knob but the door would not open. It was locked and the key was gone. Intuition told me that I had reached the right door. I pulled and twisted at the knob, but my efforts were vain. I threw my shoulder against the upper panels in two savage lunges, but they held firm. I tried again as a line of fire crept under the outer door. The attempt was still futile.

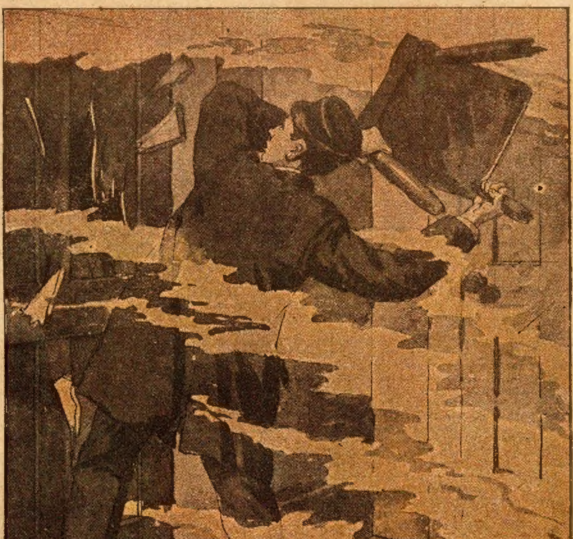
Then I broke up a heavy chair and using its firm back as a sledge, I swung against the panels again. They cracked. Under another desperate blow they gave way. Then I thrust an arm within the aperture and wrenched the door of the closet open. In the lurid glare from without, I could plainly see the form of a woman huddled upon the floor. I fell to one knee, bent over her, and lifted the head so that I might see the face.

No stiletto struck to my heart could ever give me a more agonizing sensation. It was Gertrude, altogether unconscious and with a livid welt across one of her fair white cheeks. I lifted her in my arms and smothered her dear face with tender kisses. I called her by name, by dearest names again and again. But she gave no sign of consciousness. I sat her upon a chair and dampened her face with my moist handkerchief. But still she did not respond.

As I looked about in desperation for further relief, a section of ceiling clattered down, followed in an instant by viperlike lines of flame. I had no sooner noted that, than the panel of the outer door crackled inward and a streak of flame shot toward me.

Shut off from any chance of escape by either the roof or the stairway, I again glanced out of the window. It appeared hopeless there, too. The firemen were still struggling with the obstinate ladder whose top swayed uncertainly not less than twelve feet from the third-floor window sill. I threw up the sash and glanced hopelessly down. It was too far to jump. She and I would only be dashed to death on the stones below.

It looked like the end of things for us both in that fire-and-smoke-beset third-floor room.



I swung against the panels again.

CHAPTER VIII.

OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH.

I found myself inwardly grateful now that Gertrude was unconscious. It was fortunate that she did not know the peril we were facing. She was calm and brave, under stress, I knew, for I had seen her in most untoward circumstances; but I felt that if there were to be any escape from our present predicament it were better that she did not know of our chances until after they had been taken advantage of.

So, gently patting her soft, cool cheek with my fevered hand, I turned again to confront smoke, fire and even—death. From the window I could see that the chance of the ladder top reaching us was practically nil. It still swayed perilously like a tall pine in a March gale. I glanced down the sheer wall of the building. It would have been suicide to venture to climb down. Great waves of smoke and sharp flashes of flame spewed out of the windows angrily.

Within, moreover, there was no chance of escape. Fire was now pouring through the doorway that led to the hall and the stairs and that furnished the only egress from this prison room of ours. It would have been foolhardy to attempt to leave by that way, for I knew the stairs had given way. I had heard them tremble and fall as I made my ascent.

In an agony of distress, I looked about the room like a cornered rat, I suspect, in search of some new way to flee. A faint cry from Gertrude increased my despair. I rushed to her side as her eyes opened slowly. With my arm about her, I could feel her slender form shrink at the sight. Then it quivered violently until I fell upon one knee, drew her more closely to me and cried:

"Don't worry, dear heart. I'm with you and you're safe."

I think that assurance to her put new courage into her soul. I could feel her cuddle a bit closer to my shoulder as she looked at our appalling and impending danger. I picked up her velvetlike hand and pressed it to my lips. A strange joy shot through me as I felt her sweet lips against my cheek.

We had never spoken one word of love to each other, yet in this awful crisis we had exchanged a voiceless avowal that, live or die, we could never regret. I was happy, even with death apparently closing in on me. And I was sure Gertrude was happy, too, for her dear face bore an almost seraphic smile.

Then I sprang once more into action. I felt a great surge in my breast against submitting quietly to our threatening fate. I wanted to fight—fight with every last ounce of my already overtaxed strength. And I did fight.

I looked again across the smoke and fire swept canyon that lay between the window and the ladder top. It was not less than twelve feet. Hopeless to attempt such a jump, even though one was sure of catching to the bars.

So I decided as a last desperate recourse upon another method. I tore blankets and sheets from the bed, and, Gertrude holding one end, twisted them into the semblance of a rope. Thus I made a strong line nearly twenty feet long. To one end I tied a piece of the broken chair. Then I shouted to the one intrepid fireman who was maintaining his hold on the swaying ladder top only by the exercise of the greatest skill and strength.

"Catch this," I called while the heat blistered my throat and I hurled toward him the weighted end of my improvised rope. I groaned aloud as it fell short of him more than a foot, but a gentle voice behind me spurred me to another effort.

"You brave, brave man!" I heard Gertrude murmur.

So I tried again, but with no more success. In fact, this time the near-rope sagged into the smoke and flame below before I could recover it entirely, and I had to beat out the fire that had caught in it in several places. I feared it had been weakened, yet I dared not stop to test its carrying strength anew. The room behind me was rapidly filling with creeping flame and choking smoke.

So with all my might I hurled forth the weighted end of the rope again. Ere I could see whether it had been caught, an eddying cloud of smoke intervened. I stood in an agony of dread until the smoke cleared and then my heart bounded with joy as I beheld the fireman fastening the far end of my rope about the top rungs of his ladder.

"Now," I exclaimed, turning to Gertrude who stood close to me with her hands clasped tightly, "it's your turn, dear heart."

"No, no!" she cried with shining eyes. "You go first. That line may not bear more than one of us across. And you are more important than I am."

My heart swelled in admiration at her bravery and devotion, but I did not forget my sense of chivalry.

"Women first always," I smiled sternly. "And especially the woman one loves."

"But I dare not go alone," she protested. "I'm not strong enough to draw myself across that gap."

And looking down at her slender frame —she did not appear to weigh more than ninety pounds—I realized that it would be foolhardy to urge her to trust herself alone on my makeshift rope. So I turned nervously to another expedient.

First I shrugged my shoulders as if to assure myself of my own strength. Then I ripped loose another sheet from the bed, twisted it sharply, and fastened one end to my upper left arm. Squatting on the floor, I bade Gertrude mount my back and tighten her arms about my neck. She demurred until I insisted sternly. Then I coiled the roped sheet about her, and with teeth and fingers made fast the loose end to my upper right arm. It was a daring, almost foolhardy scheme I was bent upon, but it was the last attempt against death, and I did not pause to consider the chances of its success.

Rising unsteadily to my feet, with my beloved clinging from my back, I tottered toward the window. The smoke issuing forth from behind us was almost suffocating, the pronged flames were so near that they almost lapped our clothing, the heat was so intense that I could fairly feel my skin crackle. Climbing to the sill, I slowly raised one foot over it. I could feel Gertrude tremble above me, but her lips were sealed against any outcry of fear. She was as brave as she was beautiful.

I stooped over and gripped the improvised rope that reached uncertainly across the smoking chasm to the ladder top. Then I drew my other foot across the window-sill, and with a hope in my heart that was as near to a prayer as anything I'd been worthy of since I was a kid, I slid off. I can still recall how my wrists cracked under that sudden, terrific strain. I can still remember how I shut my eyes for an instant in an agony of fear lest Gertrude might loosen her grip. I can still recollect vividly how my head swam for a moment as my legs swung wildly below me.

Then, with a tightening of my courage, I slid one hand a couple of inches along the rope. Reassured by the success of this small advance, I followed it up by moving the other hand forward. The smoke, black and vicious, swirled more thickly about us. The jets of flame, longer and more lurid, curled close to my dangling legs. The weight of Gertrude upon my shoulders, the drag of the bonds that held her upon my arms were perilously near the limit of my strength. With that first faltering advance, I felt my heart sicken at the faint chance of reaching succor at the other end of my makeshift strand.

But a cheer, vigorous and long drawn out, from the throng of spectators packed in the street below reinforced my courage. I carefully and slowly swung my way forward. Once I felt Gertrude tremble above me as I narrowly missed a firm grasp on the rope. But the next instant her dear voice reassured me.

"Brave, brave boy!" she murmured close to my ear. "I know you can do it now."

That encouragement, uttered as I struggled halfway across the yearning, hell-like chasm, gurgling black smoke and snapping with red flame, won the fight for us. Who but a craven would have given up then?

Yet, but a swing or two from the ladder top and safety. I almost let go my waning hold upon the rope. The strain had sapped every last ounce of my strength. The muscles in my arms that had felt like steel strands when I started were snapping now like overtensed wires. With eyes closed in dread, mouth open in an agonized and strangling pant for breath, I felt my fingers slipping from their support, when a spurt of water from a stream below, turned on us to protect our clothes from the encircling flames, revived me for a jiffy.

The next moment I realized I was being relieved of the load upon my shoulders. Then everything went blankly black to me.

CHAPTER IX.

GERTRUDE'S PART.

Both Gertrude and a stranger were kneeling over me when I came to. She helped me to understand my recent extremity when she saw my eyes wander vaguely and in perplexity.

"You're all right, Jack," she smiled fondly. "The firemen on the ladder top just caught you as your last grip failed. You'll be better shortly. Only a bit too much smoke, the doctor here says."

I dragged myself to a sitting posture on the floor of an apothecary shop and rubbed my smarting eyes.

"And how about you?" I asked her in bewilderment.

"Oh, they picked me off your back with a scaling hook just as if I'd been a bundled baby," she responded sweetly. "I haven't suffered a bit."

Then she bent her face close to my cheek and murmured softly:

"I owe my life to you, Jack." Then with a little catch in her voice she went on: "And I'm glad of it."

Stimulants poured down my throat put me on my feet shortly. I drove off a crowd of reporters who surrounded me in an effort to get the story of my rescue, I drew Gertrude close to me and put a finger to my lips.

"Mum's the word for the present," I cautioned her, for I knew that she also had a thrilling tale to tell about her imprisonment in the burning lodging house. And I didn't want that to become public until I had solved all angles of the taxicab robbery and rounded up both the robbers and their plunder.

On my nerve alone I stuck to the task. I managed to sneak away with Gertrude to her apartment, and there she told me in detail of her bitter night's adventure.

"I didn't let you know how excited and fearful I was as I was leaving you," she nodded her head piquantly. "If I had you'd never have allowed me to take the risk. But it was worth while after all—especially when I could be saved by you. But let me hear about yourself first. You're still wet as from a plunge, clothes and all."

"Nothing at all," I assured her, though I couldn't entirely hide a grimace. "Let's hear about yourself first."

"Well," she went on as she looked at me solicitously, "you know I left you to follow the young woman we had seen in the restaurant with Bertrandi. I saw her enter that dingy rooming-house in Twenty-first street, and at the same time noticed the sign in the window: 'Maid wanted. Apply within.' It occurred to me at once that by a little strategy I might learn anything you wanted to known about Bertrandi's companion, and also might be fortunate enough to learn something about that young bandit himself."

"And you did learn something?" I broke in impatiently.

"Yes, quite a bit," Gertrude smiled happily. "But I'm going to keep you in suspense. I'm going to tell my story consecutively."

"I beg your pardon," I bowed humbly. "I'll bite out my tongue before I interrupt you again."

She patted my cheek gently with her soft hand. Pretty close to Heaven, that was in my idea, I can tell you.

"So I went up to the basement door and knocked—pretty lightly, I guess, for I had to knock twice more before a hard-faced woman opened it just a trifle and peering out crossly at me snarled: 'What's wanted?' I was ready to run away then but I stuck it out. 'I called about the sign in the window,' I said.

"Then she opened the door a little more, I could see that she was broad and muscular—a perfect Amazon of a woman, except the face which looked harder than a rock. She glanced me over curiously, then, sneeringly. 'You're too young, also too soft,' she snapped. 'But try me at least,' I urged; 'I am so in need of work.'

"So she tried me. I was taken in, told I was to work only during the day, that I must go home at nights, and was promised ten dollars a week. That aroused my suspicions at once, for I knew that inexperienced and unrecommended housemaids were never paid that much money. The result was that I kept my eyes sharply open from the moment she beckoned me in with her great rough hand.

"The first thing she did was to set me at work washing windows in a rear room on the first floor." Gertrude smiled piquantly as she proceeded to describe her experience at the task: "It was the first time I had ever washed windows in all my life. Also the first time I had ever heard of them being washed at night. I had plenty of rags and hot water, but I just couldn't manage to get them clean.

"The woman—Maggie, I later learned her name was—watched me for a time with a sniff of scorn at my inefficiency. Then she grabbed the drying cloths out of my hand, snorted 'What a helpless lot of young folks there be abroad in the land!' and started in on the job herself. She hurt my feelings, but I'll have to give her credit of being able to work.

"Then she conducted me up narrow rear stairways to the second floor. On the way I made keen use of my ears. From out of some of the rooms we passed came the ribald voices of women. Some indicated intoxication, others sheer abondon. Occasionally the rough words of a man issued forth in menace, profanity, or worse. I began to feel a shudder of fear gripping my back.

"As we reached the second floor hall, a door opened and a woman's frowsy head projected itself out. In the flickering light of a gas-jet I recognized the face of the woman we had seen in the restaurant. I made a mental note of the location of the room, as with a bleared eye she yelled: 'Maggie, I'm dyin' for a drink. Rush up a bucket of suds fer me, will ye?'

"Maggie stopped and croaked: 'Show the color o' yer coin, will yer.' The woman in the doorway laughed brazenly. 'Coin?' she cried. 'Why sure, look at this!' and she flaunted a yellow twenty-dollar bill. At once my mind went back to the roll of similar bills her companion, Bertrandi, had displayed in the restaurant."

"Right you were girlie," I just couldn't help from butting in. "Her twenty came from Bertrandi's pile, and his pile came out of the taxicab robbery."

"I'm glad you know," she returned, as two pink spots showed in her pale cheeks. "It was worth something to go through that experience. But to get back to my story. The big bill satisfied Maggie. 'I'll get yez two buckets fer that,' she grinned, and she pushed me back downstairs in front of her.

"She handed me a quarter and a large bucket. 'Go round to Daly's on the corner,' she ordered, 'and bring back the beer.' My heart revolted at the task, but I managed to keep a check on my tongue. I can't tell you how I did her order. I don't clearly remember myself, but I did it.

"When I got back Maggie was waiting. She lifted the pail to her lips and took a huge gulp. Then she gave me a couple of glasses and ordered me to take them and the beer to the room of the frowsy-headed woman on the second floor—'New Hat Kate' she called her.

"New Hat Kate was busy talking to a hard-faced man, red-haired and with a long red scar down his cheek."

"Which cheek?" I broke in quickly.

"The left, I think," replied Gertrude with the ends of her soft fingers against her brow. "Yes, I'm sure, it was the left cheek."

"Good," I chuckled; "it was Scar-face Jack Hitchens, the desperado who held up Bertrandi and his gang a couple of hours ago and got away with some of his swag."

"That helps explain something then," she ran on breathlessly. "As soon as I had left the beer and closed the door upon them, I sank upon my knees at the keyhole. Jack," she lowered her voice and went on in real distress, "I never played eavesdropper in my life before." I nodded vigorously in affirmation. "But the fact," she continued, "that they had stopped talking while I was in the room made me feel that they might be saying something that it would be worth our while to know. So I promptly put my ear against the door.

"And I did hear something, too. The woman was talking. 'He promised me a thousand,' she was saying, hoarsely, 'but he only gives me a measly hundred. It ain't square, I'm tellin' yer, and I'm gonna get even with the close-fisted guy.' 'Lemme help,' the man's gruff voice broke in. 'How kin yer?' she asked.

"I didn't get the next words because they were drowned in the gulping of beer, but when I did make out again what was being said, the man was chortling: 'Kate, I'll get it all away from him. Watch me.' 'But where 'm I comin' in?' she asked. 'Meet me at my joint in West street in a couple of hours,' he said, 'an' if I've pulled anyt'ing out of him, me lady, ye'll get yer share!' 'W'at'll it be?' she put in. 'A fourt', he promised. 'Yer on,' she agreed. 'Now here's the secret: Bertrandi an' his gang's goin' to divvy in 'n hour or so in Mike Scanlan's place in Chambers street. You kin ketch 'em w'en they come out.' "

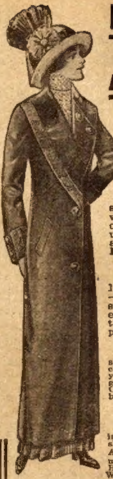
"Girl, you're a wonder," I wrung her hand gleefully. "You've pieced this whole thing out for me."

Then I proceeded to tell her how Scarface Hitchens had waylaid Bertrandi and his gang in the street and had wrested away part of their booty.

"But we'll get it back," I exclaimed. "We'll run down to Hitchens' joint in West street and round him up while he's passing that fourth share over to this fine young woman of the double cross. If it hadn't been for what you overheard we'd be in the dark about this."

She was looking at me in a pained sort of way. It took me a minute to realize what was the matter.

"Pardon me," I started in again. "I'd forgotten all about what happened to you. How did it come out?"



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"You really want to know?" she asked, naively.

I nodded vigorously in the affirmative.

"Well, the floor at my feet creaked just then, and before I could rise they had jerked open the door and seized me. I tried to cry out, but the man thrust his huge hand over my mouth and then she gave him her handkerchief to gag me with. They carried me struggling to the third floor. There she dabbed a cloth against my nostrils. I smelled my fate in an instant. They were chloroforming me. But before sensibility finally left me I made out to understand the girl say: 'We'll lock her up here, and after a while fire the place. There's no tellin' what's she heard us say.'"

CHAPTER X.

GANGSTER VERSUS GANGSTER.

The time for quick and decisive action had come again. Though Bertrandi and his gang appeared to have escaped me, I still had a chance—from what Gertrude had told me—to nab Scar-face Hitchens and the booty he had forced from the original taxicab thieves. Bertrandi, Braggins, and Broderic, I figured, must be at the bottom of the river by this time.

"You're quite sure that you heard this man Hitchens tell New Hat Kate to meet him in his joint in West street in a couple of hours?" I asked Gertrude by way of assurance.

"I'm not sure as to their names," she smiled. "You're supplying them. But the rest of it is all right."

"Then we'll run down to West street," I told her, rising hastily, "and see just how much booty Scar-face turns over to Kate, eh?"

On a Broadway corner I picked up a taxicab and stowed Gertrude away in it. Then I sought a telephone and got into communication with police headquarters. My name was good enough to get a detail of four plain-clothes men. They were to meet me in sight of Hitchens' place within half an hour.

"We'll get some satisfaction out of all this," I told Gertrude, as I rejoined her in the cab after starting the chauffeur to my rendezvous with the detectives. "We'll nab Hitchens for obtaining some of the stolen property, and that'll give us a string on which to hang our story. Also we'll have the satisfaction of having New Hat Kate and Hitchens locked up on an attempted murder charge."

"How is that?" inquired my companion.

"Didn't they try to put you out of the way tonight?" and I stroked her soft hand as she shuddered under the recollection.

We were silent nearly all the way downtown—I with my conjectures as to what we were likely to discover, and she, I know from the dear side glances of apprehension she turned on me, with fear lest some new danger involve me. Two blocks from the retreat of Hitchens—which was known as the quarters of the most desperate gang of gunmen and thieves in the entire crime-beset metropolis—I stopped the taxi and clambered out.

"Remain here," was my direction to both the chauffeur and the girl. Then I sauntered slowly down West street, that night thoroughfare of the human scum of a great city.

Within two blocks I picked up the four plain-clothes men from police headquarters. To each of them I hurriedly explained my suspicions and my purpose, without giving away the secret of my discoveries in the taxicab robbery. I didn't propose that the slow-moving police should hog any of the credit due me—and Gertrude.

The plan was simple. Three of the men were to surround the Hitchens place with half a dozen patrolmen that they would call to their aid. With Joe Grace, a detective as brave as he was big—and measured six foot three in his stockinged feet, I was to break in the front way. There'd be a fight with guns probably, but like all gangsters, Hitchens and his thugs were sure to retreat in a brush with the police. Then they would fall easily into the hands of the cops surrounding the joint. But the plan didn't work out. Somebody got to Hitchens before I did.

Grace and I had barely reached the tumble-down front door which led by devious passages to the secluded quarters of the gangster when there came to our ears the muffled snap of a revolver shot. Before we could glance, wide-eyed, at each other, two more shots resounded almost as one, then three, then a rapid fusillade.

Through the door, ajar some inches, came the fearsome noise of a desperate scuffle. Profanity fouler than any I had ever heard, even in all my varied experience; screeches of pain that told some bullets had hit a mark; the incessant crack of weapons that proved the activity of deadly automatics; an unearthly shriek from a woman's throat; the confused brush as of a mass of struggling human bodies all testified to some thrilling battle to the death.

And to Detective Grace, schooled in the ways of criminals, the explanation was easy. Two rival gangs had clashed somewhere in the bowels of the retreat of one of them. And rival gangs hate one another worse than they hate the law.

"Follow me close," the detective yelled, after he had snapped out his explanation of the situation.

"No, follow me close," I shot back, and I crowded through the doorway and along the uneven passageway ahead of him.

I was guessing just about then that this hidden encounter involved some angle of the taxicab robbery, and I didn't propose to miss its meaning. All thought of possible danger from flying bullets or gangsters' fists left me. I was only intent, as a newspaper reporter, on the story ahead. An additional incentive was that it was likely to be a "scoop."

In the dark passage I stumbled down a short stairway. Then, guided by the continued crack of guns, I ran across an empty, ill-smelling room, and through another doorway. Up a narrow stairs I scrambled, Grace close at my heels, but panting like a heated dog.

The noise of combat grew louder; the curses were thicker and more curdling; the shrieks of pain became more frequent. We were nearing the scene. Yet in the darkness of our path to it, suddenly it came to me that we were likely to be punctured by a stray bullet, or run through with the keen knife of some escaping combatant.

At tne top of the stairs we paused. From above us the clash of combat now came. I looked up through a narrow hole in the ceiling from which the plaster had fallen in frequent spots. I could see now the frequent fiery spit of the automatics. The fight was evidently in the garret.

Grace drew his electric flashlight and snapped it about. It enabled us to find a rickety ladder that led to the garret. The detective gripped me by the arm.

"Fool!" he hissed in my ear. "It 'ud be sure death."

But I threw off his hand and ran up the ladder. As I stuck my head through the aperture in the ceiling, I felt the "zip" of a bullet past my ear and its "ping" as it drove into the wood back of me. I ducked with eyes closed, but when I bobbed my head up again I was just in time to behold the scene lighted up with the flash of two revolver shots.

I've been the eye-witness of some awful catastrophes. I've seen the dead littered at some big fires and some horrible accidents. But I never before saw a shambles like this.

In that fleeting light I beheld upon the blood-reeked floor of that narrow, unwindowed attic room eight men in the throes of death. Yet, consumed with hatred even in their last moments, they were gripping fiendishly at one another's throats. One fellow—I shall never forget the spectacle—with his crimsoned fingers was ripping away at a gaping wound in another's face.

But the living made a more terrible picture than the dying. Three men with hands and cheeks blood-smirched stood braced against a low side wall. Two of them held a revolver in each hand; the third, with one hand shot away at the wrist, brandished an automatic in the other. All three were pumping bullets at two red-stained figures set against the opposite wall. A companion of these two was plumping face forward upon the reeking floor in the instantaneous glance I got of the combat.

In the next gun flash a new figure appeared. Against a farther wall, crouching upon her knees, with one arm covering her face as if to blot out the horrid scene about her, was a woman. I did not need to see her features to know who she was. The great waving plumes and the prodigal gold braid upon her crushed headpiece told me she was New Hat Kate.

The shaky floor jarred under a double impact. In the next gun flash I saw two more of the fighting men had fallen. Only three were left. The firing slowly slackened as the groans and curses of the wounded increased.

I reached below to Detective Grace. "Give me your flashlight," I said.

When he handed it up, I snapped it. The white stream landed squarely in the blood-stained face of a man crawling close to where I had stuck my head through the floor. He stopped, and his maddened eyes bulged as he looked at me. Then he flopped back and cringed pitiably as a cry of terror gurgled through his livid lips.

"You, you here?" I could make out. "I thought we left you drowned. God! it must be a ghost come to mock me!"

The squirming figure was Bertrandi. He had thought, with the battle turning against him, to crawl down from the attic and escape. But I had blocked him. No wonder he was appalled at my astonishing appearance.

By the time I had scrambled through the aperture in the ceiling and reached him, only one of the combatants remained standing. That was Hitchens; and Grace, climbing after me, promptly subdued him, already weakened by three wounds, with the butt end of his revolver.

Bertrandi was gripping his chest when I bent over him. As I shot the flashlight into his face I noted that it was a deathly white.

"Hurt much?" I asked.

"Hell, yes!" he gasped. I'm bleeding away, but I ain't going to cash in until I've settled with that crooked traitor, New Hat Kate. She gave me away to Hitchens. Where is she? Where is she?"

He tried to pull himself to his knees, but pitched forward with a groan upon the floor below. Flashing down my light, I saw Kate disappearing. I let her go. There was bigger game nearer. Yet I was not too busy to comprehend the whole explanation of this present scene.

Kate had gone to Hitchens' quarters, as the pair had agreed upon, to collect her share of the booty Scar-face had got out of Bertrandi and his gang. Bertrandi, miraculously saving himself after his bath in the river, had gathered some more of his followers and descended on Hitchens' joint to attempt to recover the loot lost earlier in the night. The two gangs had clashed in that secluded attic, and this bloody outcome had followed.

Grace and I proceeded to search the clothes of the crimson-stained figures about us. Roll after roll of fat bills we drew forth, pitching them in a heap in the middle of the room. Later when the bank officials counted it, they found twenty-one thousand dollars. The amounts carried off by Braggins and Broderic, it developed, had sunk with them in the North River and were never recovered.

I left the job of jailing the cornered desperadoes to the police. It was past one o'clock now, and my only thought was to reach a 'phone and let McCabe, the testy city editor of the Star, know the result of my assignment. If I hurried, I'd be able to get the story in for another smashing "scoop."

I hustled out of Hitchens' joint and down the street to where I had left Gertrude and the taxi. She and the chauffeur were just turning over a woman to a copper. It was New Hat Kate. In her flight she had passed the cab, and Gertrude, recognizing her, had pursued and caught her.

So the night's work, exciting and desperate as it had been since Gertrude and I had dined together, was both complete and successful. Likewise it gave the Star a "scoop" that it hasn't stopped bragging about yet.

Bertrandi didn't live the night out. Hitchens and Kate went up the river to Sing Sing for ten years apiece for their attempt to destroy Gertrude by fire.

And Gertrude? Well, fellows, maybe I oughtn't to say it, but it's a fact: She thinks I'm the greatest reporter that ever breathed. And yours truly? Well, I'm no slouch at the game, am I?

The End.

* * *

Over the Coals.

Red-hot coals belong to Halloween, for the Druids never forgot to build great fires upon their mountain tops as tokens of their rejoicing over the generous harvests the gods had vouchsafed them; so the young people of today must merrily test their fortunes on skillet and griddle, also by roasting chestnuts, corn and apples, render the spell of their nonsense incantations. For instance, while roasting corn they mutter in sepulchral tones something after this fashion:

Fire, fire burn your best,
As my fortune here I test.
Every kernel popping white
Makes my fortune fine and bright
Every kernel scorched and black
Sets a goblin on my track.

Then the counting of kernels and serving follow, and the preponderance of blackened kernels seals bad luck for the year, and vice versa. Chestnuts and peanuts are likewise tested, and the devotee must eat all the favorable nuts and his guests be content with the remainder.

When the fire has burnt low and a good bed of hot ashes remains, then comes the roasting of corn, nuts and apples underneath the ashes, and when the fruit is supposedly well done each guest receives in turn a sharpened stick or fork, and he spears for luck.

If he happens to spear an apple or nut well done and ready to eat his luck is all right. But if he gets only an underdone one, or if it has a bad core or meat, ill luck is his portion. Still if the underdone apple contains seven seeds or fourteen it neutralizes all unfavorable conditions and the guest exclaims:

My spear has struck
The best of luck.

* * *

Apple Tricks.

For some unexplained reason—perhaps some faint, faint thread of heredity running backward throughout the ramifications of time and nations to the story of the Garden of Eden—the apple has always been considered a fateful fruit, big with prophecy of things to come. In many tests of fortune does it play a part. Eat one before a mirror in a darkened room on Halloween, and your future spouse will look over your shoulder. Throw the peel over your left shoulder and it will form the initial of the one you are to marry. Cut it open and take from it two seeds; stick these on either eyelid and watch to see which will stick the longer, for that one is to win in love's race. A mischievous girl will bear close watching in this test, or she may help on the cause of her favorite suitor by winking off his rival. Then there is the time-honored way of counting the apple seeds: "One I love; two I love; three I love, I say; four I love with all my heart, and five I cast away." If there are five seeds a girl may soften the prophecy to her sweetheart by the lines of the song:

"But counting the seeds is not the way
A body's love to prove.
For the very one I cast away
Is just the one I love."

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The Phantom Baby

By Bertha Seavey Saunier

THERE were days of delight for pleasure-seekers in Paris. Mrs. Bell, lovely in her white morning gown, with its festoons of rich lace had been in the whirl of social adventure for weeks and was sated with everything. She had begun to feel this in a vague manner on the day that she entered the private drawingroom of her apartments to find her husband seated at the table lounging over a game of solitaire. She stopped abruptly. She drew her hand across her eyes and looked again at the enfolding crook of her husband's arms and then drew a sharp breath.

"Give her to me—give me the baby—where—why—" stopping in amazed dismay and fear—"Jack Bell, where did that baby come from?"

She stopped midway in the room helpless in her surprise. Her husband regarded her for a long moment and answered irritably:

"There is no child here, Marie, as you know. Are you seeing things to-day? It's something you have eaten, probably—or taken—last night, for instance, at the hop we went to at Greys'; there must have been too much champagne. Or what is the matter with you?" he questioned, his eyes searching the fair young face keenly.

His wife dropped into the nearest chair. It was a structure of a spider-leg, dainty make, having blue figures in its satin covering, and a high frame on which a pair of white, lace-bedecked arms now came to rest. Her eyes still retained their startled look.

"It's gone now," she breathed, still gazing intently at the space in the crook of his arms, "quite gone. I don't know—I can't see where it is—but I'm sure I saw it in your lap—Dorothy, you know, Jack—our very own baby."

At which explanation Jack only grinned disagreeably. Here was a joke, most assuredly. He had never heard Marie do the gush stunt over Dorothy. Much less had she been conscious of her existence to any appreciable extent. He picked up a fresh cigar and tilted it at a sardonic angle in one side of his mouth.

"One would think," he remarked, searching slowly in his vest pocket for a match, "that the child was not in New York, some two thousand miles or less from this room." He was humorously aware at this moment—as he had been for some little time past—that his wife was altogether too pretty for his peace of mind, or for her own good. She attracted too much attention from men, and temptations were many, too much for a vivacious girl like Marie. He ought to do something about it. He certainly was feeling annoyed by her behavior. And now, when it came to this—he smoked on in irritated silence. But Marie was neither irritated nor mentally confused over the situation, but sat in silent disregard of his manner, lost in wondering amazement and dismay. Assuredly she was in her right senses, her thoughts clear, sane, and untroubled. She had taken no champagne the night before and she had not danced late. She was not over-wearied, she knew, unless subconsciously. So she sat pondering over the phantom child that she had seen but so fleeting a moment in Jack's arms and wondered what it could mean, what could be its portent.

Of course Mrs. Ward, the head nurse in charge of Dorothy's apartments in the New York home, was perfectly efficient, perfectly satisfactory in every way. How could anything happen to Dorothy with a half-dozen servants to look after her and with Mrs. Ward at their head? The idea was too preposterous to suppose, that if so much money were spent in the care of a baby as they were spending for Dorothy, anything could go wrong with the child. And certainly Dorothy had cost a small fortune in the ten months since she came. Dear, dear, but children were a care, anyway! Her husband's voice roused her.

"You would better dress, Marie," he said, evidently deciding to make no complaint of her behavior as yet. You know we are to meet the Wadners after our drive and go to the gallery to see Grey's picture he has had hung there.

"Oh, yes," was the answer, but Marie continued to drum lightly on the arm of the spider-legged chair with white, jeweled fingers, her thoughts still occupied with the child, Dorothy. One must have children, assuredly. If there is a great deal of money there must be children to inherit it. Of course. How very logical. What could be done with all the Bell wealth if there were no children? And it was eminently pleasant to be free from the care of them. Why, she and Jack had scarcely seen the child for more than an hour at a time—barely that—since she had come to them. They had both been too busy with social obligations to spend time with her. Marie sighed. It was like being a wooden shuttle, sent here and there and back again with endless and unflagging irresistance in the midst of the woof and warp of social dates—only a wooden shuttle did not have senses that became wearied—that was the difference. Marie arose at this and, dismissing Dorothy by humming a bar of light opera, stopped at the door, suddenly remembering a new engagement recently made.

"Jack, you know Lon de Mere, that handsome fellow we saw at the hop last night? Well, he asked me to drive to the Palace Gardens this evening—you don't mind if I go, do you? You'll be busy with your own party tonight, I suppose," she added, casually.

Jack frowned a bit, but he replied, "All right, but I wouldn't go about with him much—he's a fast fellow, I hear."

Which permission and prospect were not enough to drive the fact of the phantom baby entirely from the mind of the young and pretty mother, as she walked away, still humming the opera air, but yet quaking a bit over the "vision." It was so real, so certain—Dorothy in an unwonted place in her father's arms. Strange! One would almost think it a visitation, she decided.

"Be as quick as you can, Jeannette—I shall be late. Do my hair in the roll and puffs, but don't stop to curl it. We will have a more elaborate style for this evening," she said to her maid, as she sank into the low seat in front of her dresser, her mind reverting to Jack as she watched the maid arrange a simple coiffure.

"Jack is getting to be absurd," she was thinking, as the deft fingers herded flecks of light upon her head, holding them in place with unseen fastenings. "Lon de Mere is a very handsome man and I think he is a good man, too. Jack need not be absurd. He rides too much with that Mrs. Lavicy, anyway. She's divorced from her husband, who pays her five hundred dollars a month to spend on herself. I can't see what Jack likes about her. Eh? What to wear at my throat? Bring me the jewel-case—the red plush one, that's it, yes." She finished by bending over the jewels that the maid put in her hands, and at last selected an opal with a heart of fire for her throat and a pearl-encrusted comb for her hair.

"Now," she mused, as Jeannette left the room for a moment, "that baby—I cannot forget how plainly I saw her in Jack's lap, of all places that is the most unlikely for Dorothy to be. Jack was always afraid of her—wouldn't touch her for fear she'd break, he said." She hurried into a street gown while Jeannette brought a wrap from the press. "Jeannette, you have forgotten my lorgnette—get it for me," she ordered, as she drew on her gloves. "I suppose the car is waiting, isn't it?"

"Yes, madame," said the maid, after peering out at the window.

In the tonneau Jack faced her, trying to discover some disparaging look in her countenance upon which he would be able to build his disfavor. But Marie, on guard, disarmed his suspicions with her ready chatter about the day's engagements, noting with nods and smiles, as they bowled through the boulevards, the many friends of their set who were out like themselves for pleasure. The day was fair and fine. All Paris, even the sordid parts of it, radiated beauty and light from its limestone buildings; the gregarious dwelling houses, built one above another and guarded by porters at the common entrance; the institutes, schools, and universities, hospitals, shops, many of them elaborately carved and ornamented; while along the twenty-two curving boulevards were endless shops and restaurants, towers and statues adorned with figures, flags, and gayly colored advertisements (the latter confined to the towers) all lying in the fair day like a great picture touched with glorified light. But before all its bright beauty ever protruded the form of Dorothy. Marie's memory hung upon it in spite of her attempt to ignore it, to forget it. It was strangely persistent.

"The Seine is rather pretty, don't you think?" remarked Jack, as they trundled across the Pont du Carrousel with its colossal figures guarding the entrance at either end. "There are thirty bridges in Paris, crossing the Seine," he added, nonchalantly lighting a cigar. "Something like sixteen thousand streets, too," he added, but stopped with his attention riveted upon the fair face of his wife which suddenly had paled and seemed frozen in amazed fright. "I say, Marie," he protested, "what's the matter now, eh? You want to quit this nonsense right away and behave yourself."

"Oh, I wish I could," breathed Marie, sinking back in her place and reaching aimlessly for something to grasp. "I saw something as plain as day, Jack, truly I did."

"Good enough," he answered, "and so did I—saw all Paris driving about as gay as you please. But there were no phantom babies on the films. But proceed. Don't let me interrupt," he concluded, smiling cynically into her startled eyes.

"Why, there was—was a crib—and Dorothy was in it, and it was hung across the entrance of the bridge. I saw it plainly, Jack, as if it were real." Her voice was halting nervously.

"Nonsense!" said her husband, reaching for her hand and feeling some growing concern for her state of mind. "I think you would better go back to the hotel and rest. You are overwrought, Marie. It is an attack of nerves, or something like that, due to an overstrain. I must have in a doctor to see you." He had his arm about her by this time, but she drew away and sat erect proudly defiant.

"It is nothing of the sort, Jack Bell. I am not tired and I am not going insane, and I am not any child to be cuddled by you in broad day on the boulevard. I know what this thing is—it's a visitation. There is nothing else to say about it," she declared.

Jack regarded her silently. He was piqued at her rebuff, but still curious.

"Twice in one forenoon is going some," he answered with his own sardonic smile. "You will be seeing snakes in all the corners of the house next thing I know," he continued. But his brutal lack of sympathy only bewildered her, only antagonized her, and did not quell her apprehensión. Some awful fate, she knew, was about to overtake them. She glanced at the husky back of the chauffeur and shuddered. Many deaths had come to persons trusting their lives in the hands of careless chauffeurs.

"Let's go back; let's not ride any longer, Jack," she begged, her mind obsessed with this new solution of the mystery.

"If we go to the gallery now we shall be too early to meet the others," he objected.

"Oh, do let us go anyway, please, Jack," she coaxed, and without waiting for him she ordered the car driven to the Luxembourg. She alighted in evident relief and loitered at ease among the groups of picture fanciers who were walking in the picturesque gardens in the midst of which stands the palace of art, built some three hundred years ago after the style of architecture found then in Florence. To-day the gardens were bright with June sunshine and gay with color, but to pretty Mrs. Bell their gayety was mockery. It bored her. When at last they entered the building to keep their appointment with their artist friends, she did not see the messenger boy who entered with them. They made their leisurely way inside and were occupied with a marine scene hung prominently near the entrance, when their attention was arrested by a voice raised above the subdued murmur in monotonous repetition:

"Monsieur Bell—Monsieur Bell—Monsieur Bell!" the voice called.

"Oh, Jack!" said Marie, instantly divining that what she had dreaded was about to be realized. "It's for us—it's a cablegram, I know it's—"

"Here!" called her husband, raising his hand to attract the eye of the messenger, and the boy ran toward them.

It was a cablegram. Jack took it and hurriedly tore it open. When he glanced over it he hesitated, but a look of relief was in his eyes.

"Why, it says that Mrs. Ward died—is dead of an operation in the hospital," he announced. "Now, I wonder why she did it—had the operation, you know, without telling us about it."

"Why—er—well, she did mention it before we came away, but you see I thought she could wait as well as not," Marie admitted, dropping into a convenient seat and laying her sunshade across her lap, then fumbling for her smelling salts. "Dear me, how very awkward! How absurd! You will please tell me what we are to do, for I'm sure I don't know," she ended hopelessly.

"Dorothy will be looked after," her husband replied.

"Yes, but not as she should be. How absurd for Mrs. Ward to do anything like this when we are away. She might know there is a risk in such things," complained Marie. "I am sure I feel quite vexed with her. She had no right to do it, none in the least." She sniffed at her salts diligently.

"Well, well; there are plenty left to look after Dorothy—there is Blimer, the butler, and say—what's the matter with that housekeeper, Rickerts? No doubt she could take charge of the nursery, at least until we find a head nurse to take Mrs. Ward's place. Eh?" quoth Dorothy's father, adjusting his cigar anew and pulling at it heartily in view of the serious nature of the case in hand.

"Oh, yes, but how do we know what will be done?" Marie answered, painfully annoyed. "And I think children are an awful care. I never thought such dreadful things could happen to them."

"Well, there's no kick from me if the head nurse behaves herself," Jack answered, "but when she leaves without so much as by your leave, as it were, it's some tough on us parents—isn't it?" he ended, trying seriously to be a help to Marie in her perplexity.

"I wish I knew what to do," Marie persisted.

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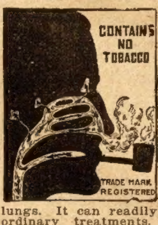

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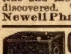

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"We might consult Grey—here he comes now," Jack suggested, as a tall, blond young man advanced, smiling his welcome, and was about to lead them away when the matter just discussed was presented to him.

Grey looked downcast. "I hate to suggest what I have in mind, but my conscience will not let me keep it. I want you to stay here, you know," he said. "I was going to mention steamers, you know."

"But it is eight days to cross in the steamer, and Dorothy must be looked after right away," Marie objected.

"True," Grey admitted thoughtfully. "Well," there's the cable—you can tell the folks what to do from here, can't you? Send them instructions every hour—feet warm and head cool, you know, and warm the milk before adjusting it to her digestive organs."

Marie brightened happily. "The very thing—hire a baby specialist, Jack. We can do it, can't we? We can get the best—"

"Why, sure," joined in Jack, acting upon the idea. "We will scrape Paris clean and pick out the best specialist for babies in the bunch. Grey, you are a trump. Hurray! The baby is saved already, or my name is Mud!"

"But don't stop, Jack, dear; don't wait for anything. Let us get in touch with a specialist as soon as we can and set him to work. He ought to be sending—"

"Sure. There ought to be milk-grams on the way even now," Jack declared facetiously, as they moved away and prepared to leave the building.

Upon inquiry it was learned that no one in Paris was better fitted to fill the position of adviser over the health of the heiress to the Bell millions than M. Le Grande, whose wonderful success with children was of national repute. Accordingly he was engaged to come to the apartments occupied by Dorothy's parents, and from there superintend the care of the child by sending hourly cablegrams to the nursery in New York. And Dorothy's father cheerfully paid the bills. It was a novel way to expend money. And only one ominous item protruded in the otherwise happily adjusted arrangement. Jack himself mentioned it on the morning after the specialist had been engaged.

"Well, Marie, we've sent numbers of these milk-grams across the pond," he said, "but it seems to me there ought to be some sort of response. They say money will talk, but I like to hear two sides of the conversation. Don't you think Dorothy ought to be sending some sort of a reply by this time?"

"Oh, Jack, I saw Dorothy again last night as plain as day," Marie answered, a nervous quiver in her voice, "and I was not asleep, either. I was wide awake, and the light was still in my room. She was in her cab and a strange looking man with a red mustache was behind her with his hand on the handle of the cab. He looked evil, Jack, with a rough, slouchy-looking suit of clothes on. I can't think what it all means—these phantoms, you know. They will drive me frantic, I believe, if they continue."

Jack was thoughtful. He was beginning to think that perhaps Marie was having some sort of telepathic or occult communication with the child that would bear looking into. But then, he mused, such things were very difficult to look into, since none knew the highway of the science of the mind sufficiently well to act as a guide.

"Marie," he said, "did you sleep well last night?"

"How could I sleep? Oh, I never dreamed that children could be such a care!" A knock here was given on the door, and in answer to the invitation a messenger stood before them, holding a yellow envelope, which he gave to Jack.

"At last," said Marie, "we will have an answer."

Jack opened the paper and read: "Yours received. All right. Blimer." Truly this was not very gratifying, but it was better than nothing, thought the parents of far-away Dorothy. They thought it and they said as much in feigned relief. In reality it was a cold and heartless message. It was tantalizing, in fact. It contained no hint of the baby's welfare; no intimation that the baby was alive and happy. It left them still swimming helplessly in their sea of doubt and dread—a sea troubled and driven by these strange phantoms which Marie complained she had seen so persistently and unaccountably.

"Illusions!" Jack forced himself to believe they were that.

"It really seems as if we ought to take the first steamer and go home," Marie declared, at last, when she had trailed wearily from one place to another in a fruitless search for diversion.

"Now, don't talk that way, Marie. There isn't the slightest need of our going home. I am of the opinion that the amount of money we are spending ought to fetch Dorothy along with a finish and a luster worthy of the laurel," Jack replied, urging his hopes to the fore and routing his doubts with a confident wave of the hand. "There is a vast amount of power and efficiency, as you know, Marie, in wealth. Its scope is practically without limit. No one with a grain of sense can deny it."

Marie did not deny it. She was not at this moment attempting anything so futile. Besides, her nerves were deranged and her thoughts were wilfully concentrated on that far-distant room in the great city—the room which she had entered all too rarely, where was her babe, Dorothy, the child and heiress of the great Bell fortune. But was this fortune sufficient to protect the child, after all? Was the child there? Was she well? Was she comfortable? Was she alive? And if all was well with her why did these phantoms, these visitations, haunt her poor mother who was helpless and defenceless in far-away Paris?

"Why don't you go and rest, Marie?" Jack asked. "There isn't the slightest need of getting into a fret over this matter. Go and rest—take a sleeping powder, or whatever it is they take when a person can't sleep. Go to bed, there's a good girl—you're fretting gets on my nerves—it does, for a fact. Go away, do."

Marie sighed and left the room. She had barely reached her sleeping-room when an imperative knock at the drawing-room door brought Jack to his feet with a growl of protest. It was another cablegram. Oh, all right—good. They were beginning to wake up over there at last. He tore the paper open:

"Can't find Dorothy. Kidnaped!" he read, and flung the message angrily out at arm's length, his eyes still riveted upon the fateful words, his face frozen in a scowl of dismay. With the other hand he would have pulled the bell-rope, but he withdrew it on second thought.

"No, I won't have Marie called," he muttered, checking his turbid emotions with an effort. "She is too much wrought up over those phantoms she has seen. Hold on, now. It may be that these visitations mean that the child is dead—perhaps that is it." Dorothy's father stood perplexed for only a moment. "Bosh!" he exclaimed, "I don't believe it. Rubbish. But where in the dickens is that baby? Oh, Doctor!" But the specialist was not in the room they had set apart for him. He had gone out, having sent directions sufficient for the forenoon. There seemed to be no one to whom the distracted father might turn in his need. He was, however, a man of some resource. He turned back to the table, took up a pen, and scratched a reply:

"Rip up hell, but find the child," he wrote, and ran out of the room. Racing down the stairway on his way to the office he encountered the proprietor of the hotel.

"What, sir," he cried, "do you think? Dorothy, my baby, is kidnaped—stolen, sir, and perhaps murdered. What am I to do to secure her return?" He waved the message he had written frenziedly before the man's startled eyes.

"Mon Dieu, Mr. Bell—monsieur—you take me surpriz—ze gentlemans iss too much eggcited—what shall he do? He will give ze robbers ze money. I think zey want ze money—yes?"

"Of course—of course. No one would steal Dorothy except to hold her for a ransom, a big ransom. But—but it is so blamed far away—it is so blamed unhandy—it's got to be done by cable. Here I have written my orders, but it's not half strong enough—words, words, only silent words, when I want action. Action, results, man! That is what I must have. My poor wife—"

"I see—ze poor mother—"

"She does not know of this. It must be kept from her."

"Good enough. She shall not be told. Ze city of New York iz far, too far, for her to hear. But you can use ze cable—ze steamers are going back and forth—you can go to New York."

But, man, it's seven days—seven days and nights, and the child in the hands of her abductors all that time. She must be found at once without delay!"

"Then, sir, you must cable ze detectives to find her at this hour—this very day; yes, ze gentleman iss right, ze detectives must rip up hell, but find ze child; it iss ze very good message to zend." The Frenchman meanwhile had gotten directly into sympathy with the dismayed father and stamped about on the tiled floor thrusting both fists into th pockets of his coat while he advised and commented, and rubbing the bald spot on the back of his head between times. His sympathy was of a profound nature and Jack accepted it gratefully, and when the message he had written was addressed and sent to Blimer, the butler and steward of his New York residence, he went upstairs again to Marie.

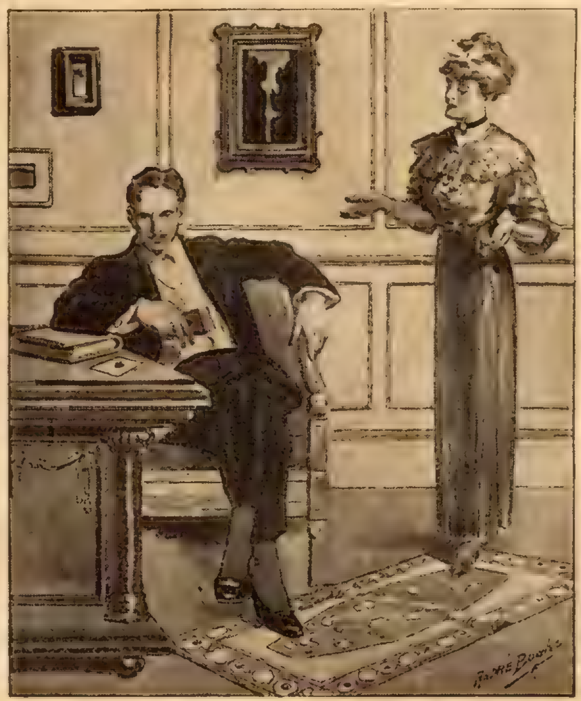
"I have changed my mind, dear, about going across—you spoke about going to New York, you know. Suppose we do go right away. I am willing if you are, and our folks can follow with the luggage. I presume Jeannette and Robson can manage everything, can't they?"

"Oh, Jack, I am so glad," cried Marie, springing up from her couch on which she had vainly sought relief. "I think we ought to go, for if we don't, I am sure these phantoms will keep coming to me as long as we stay here. We can at least find out if Dorothy is safe." She did not notice that her husband turned hastily away with the further admonition to "get ready as soon as possible."

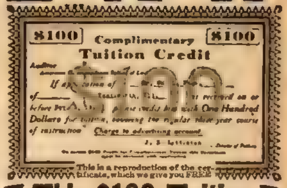
"We will be in time to take the next steamer if we start this afternoon," he said, as he left the room.

"Oh, Jeannette, I feel better already," Marie declared, as she began her preparations to leave the hotel." I am so glad I am going on the steamer—I do love the ocean; I do, I do." She hummed an opera air as her plans were hurried forward. "Of course I shall be glad to see the baby, too, but I know it is nonsense for me to imagine that she is not taken care of, with Jack paying those expensive bills. Why, everything has been done for her. Nothing could be wrong, if there is proper care, and we can always hire the best for Dorothy."

The maid averted her face and was silent. Womanhood, innate to maid and mistress alike, seemed affronted because emphasis had not been placed on the importance of mother love for the human offspring; but pleasure, always pleasure, was made paramount to duty.



"Give her to me—give me the baby!"



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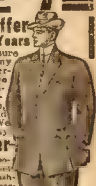

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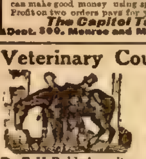

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Or, so it seemed in the case of Jeannette's employers.

The journey back to New York was without event. Jack hoarded his secret and haunted the post of the wireless by means of which he informed Blimer that Dorothy's parents were on the way to New York. Only one wireless reply reached him during the week at sea. This came on the morning of the sixth day. There was no trace of the child. But Marie was unconscious of the agony of suspense that was hanging over her. She joined with others on board the steamer in their amusements, took part in their charades, their "hops," their whist games, and flirted with young Lord Ellwin, the titled Englishman who was seeking adventure in America. He denied that he was seeking an heiress whose wealth would save him from bankruptcy. The phantom of the baby no longer "appeared" to the mother of the missing child. But Jack had a stateroom to himself, and retreated to it in moments when the suspense became unbearable and other diversions failed to appease him. But on the morning of the last day on the steamer he thought best to break the news of Dorothy's disappearance to the mother. And of course she was shocked, stunned and silenced by the blow. Her grief and fear grew as she sat staring into her husband's face until it terrified both of them.

"She is dead—Dorothy must be dead," she declared, "for it was her little spirit that came to me so many times while I was in Paris. It's all perfectly dreadful, I think. And if Mrs. Ward had been more reasonable, it would never have happened. What did she go and die for, anyway? But now Dorothy is lost—perhaps she is dead, too. Oh, dear, me! I never thought that children could bring so much trouble as this, never!" She dropped her face into her hands and sobbed tearlessly. "And now we are almost home—I saw a lot of tugs coming toward the ship—"

"One of them will have newspaper reporters in it," Jack remarked, visibly annoyed at the prospect before him. The reporters were doubtless intent on interviewing the parents of the missing child. This fact approached Marie's mind in a sudden leap and she sat up with a jerk.

"Don't let them come near me," she begged. "I won't see a single one of them. You positively must keep them away, Jack. I can't answer their horrid questions—their insinuations—I can't, I can't. Then she fell upon the bed with her face in the covers. "If I had only—only stayed at home—if we had never left New York, Jack, no one would think of stealing Dorothy—they wouldn't dare—they knew we were away, the cowards, and now they will torture my baby. They'll put out her eyes, they'll drug her to death. And who will take our money if Dorothy is dead? How will we ever dispose of it if she is not to inherit our wealth—oh, those awful men—those beasts—of course, they are men who have stolen her."

In vain Jack assured her that detectives had been seeking the child ever since she had disappeared. It was small comfort as long as no one of them had succeeded in unearthing Dorothy. And in the midst of their dismal dispute there came a rat-tat at the door. It startled both of them, for they could think of no one but the dreaded reporters coming to glean their disreputable harvest of parental grief and self-reproach and remorse, if remorse, perchance, might be discovered in the attitude of the stolen child's mother or father. There was a moment of hesitation before Jack stepped forward and jerked the door open, but no reporter was visible in the dim light of the narrow hallway. Instead there stood a smiling woman, well dressed, middle-aged, with hair gray and curling about her temples, and in her arms was a plump and cherub-faced baby. Marie sprang forward with a dry, gasping sound in her white throat. She snatched the baby to her heart.

"Rickerts—Rickerts—why, where did you get my Dorothy?" she cried, while Jack took both mother and child in his strong arms and held them there.

"Dorothy was brought home yesterday night," Rickerts answered happily, as she filled the doorway and laughingly barred out the newspaper men who were crowding into the passage, "and it was a sort of miracle that she was found by a lieutenant of the city police force. He brought her home safe and sound, just the same, and not a hair of her head hurt -"

"But how did he find her—where was she? Tell me all about everything," Marie insisted, but there was no time for Rickerts to tell the story of the kidnaping, for the newspaper men pressed close and Jack asked:

"Shall we let them snapshot us, Marie?"

"Yes, yes; let them take whatever they like," she answered, trying to disengage his arms from her person while the child, frightened over the behavior of this new grown-up world, began to cry.

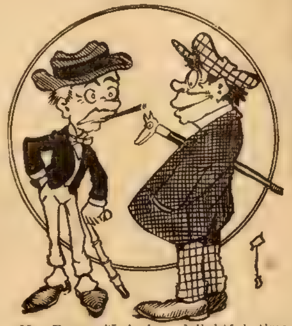
"Just tell everybody," Marie said to the men, "that we are the happiest people in the world. Tell everybody that mothers must stay at home with their babies if they are to be cared for right. Mothers and babies belong together always—you tell the people that I say so," she finished, as Rickerts took the child and succeeded in quieting its fears. And before the reunited family left the steamer a score of reporters had received Marie's conviction, which was the direct result of Dorothy's disappearance. And after they had gone away the story of the child's recovery from her abductors was made known to the impatient and excited parents.

"But now," said Marie, when she had heard the story and they were ready to disembark, "it remains to be explained what made those phantoms come to me. They were really and truly phantoms that I saw. They were misty and whitish, and frail-like, but they were real. Nobody can make me believe I dreamed when I saw them."

"It was a signal, I'll venture to say," remarked Rickerts, who was a woman of wide culture, having read many books of many kinds. "No one can explain such things, though some might try to do so. It was to warn you that Dorothy was in danger, I presume. More than that, I would be afraid to give an opinion."

"Forget it," Jack said, tossing Dorothy in his arms; "forget the phantom baby as long as we have the real thing."

* * *



Mr. Boom—"I had a delightful time last night. I spent the evening in the company of the one I most admiah."

Knocker—"Why don't you get out and do something evenings? You'll go crazy staying home alone all the time."

* * *

Duke and Ducks.

Felix Hoendorf, known to half a million Californians as "the Duke," was at his club very late on Sunday evening. If any one does not know "the Duke" he is very easy to identify whenever he is in evidence. The Duke suggested that Jimmy Scanlon, a well-known citizen of San Francisco, give a duck dinner.

"But the ducks are out of season," Jimmy protested. "Well," said the Duke, in accents Teutonic, "you invite that beautiful girl I see you with and also invite me. When you have paid the check, duck."

That's the Duke. For further purposes of identification, it might be added it was he who, being brought a platter of chicken fricassee, and discovering that it was composed entirely of the wings of the bird, said: "Take that back to Mr. Paulhan. I don't like that aviation meat."

* * *

She Was There.

Liz and Mary were proceeding to morning school, and of course they couldn't resist the attraction of gazing into shop windows on their way.

Suddenly the former paused at the window of the local photographer and glued her eyes on a certain picture. It was the annual procession of school children through the village.

"Mary!" she shrieked, excitedly, "Come 'ere!"

"What's the matter, Liz?" asked the other.

"You see the photo of Annie Smith in the third row, there? An' you see the pair o' boots b'ind Annie?"

"Yes."

"Well, that's me!"

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He says he would rather sell to good, clean, honest Americans a pure, high-grade whiskey at a profit of 10c a gallon than to barter with this thousand-fanged octopus who is driving him to wreck and ruin.

From his western office at 1640 Main st., Kansas City, Mo., he is mailing thousands of little pamphlets, telling the inside history of this great war. It's an intensely fascinating story and every free-thinking man should send for one of these free pamphlets. If any man ever waged an honest war that man is Mr. Calman. He certainly deserves the loyal support of every liberal minded American.

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Dr. J. E. Cannaday, 681 Park Square, Sedalia, Mo.

Reference: Third National Bank, Sedalia, Mo. | Could you do a better act than to send this notice to some poor sufferer of Eczema?

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This Pinex and Sugar Syrup recipe has attained great popularity throughout the United States and Canada. It has often been imitated, though never successfully.

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Advertisement

The Volcano Prisoners

Or, THE SEA COAST QUEEN

By William H. Manning

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Begun in No. 39, Sept. 28. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies, can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XV.

THE VOLCANO STRIKES.

OLIVE was waiting a few yards farther on, and beyond her was the kitchen. There Mildred paused and made a sweeping gesture.

"Do you see anything unusual?" she asked.

"No," I confessed.

"You do not look well. First of all, our cooking utensils, always kept in orderly arrangement, are scattered about. That happened while we were away to visit the ship. Next, the floor is not at the level it once had. Do you see that one side has dropped some inches? It is the same in our sleeping-room. Briefly, that side of the room has dropped down a foot, dislodging our utensils and sending them rolling about. What does that mean?"

"Are you sure—but why do I ask? You must know. Well, if the floor has sunk——"

"You stop and hesitate. Let me finish for you. Only a slight upheaval inside the volcano would cause that falling down of the floor!"

"Is the Fiery One going to swallow us up?" cried Olive, nervously.

"No, no!" I replied to the last question, though my voice doubtless lacked force. "We are perfectly safe here for now, and shall be as long as we need to stay, but I will not answer for a month from now."

With this I walked about and studied the point Mildred had mentioned. I could not fail to see what they had discovered, and the fact had an ugly suggestion. The evil odors we had previously noted fitted in with the newest worry, and I wished we were all afloat in some staunch vessel, but I would not admit my apprehensions.

"We have no evidence," I assured them, "that the volcano is any different than it always has been. Gases and shiftings may be the constant rule, and it may go on so for hundreds of years to come."

"If," asked Mildred, "a volcano does become active after a period of quiet, is the change sure to be long-continued and gradual?"

"I won't claim great knowledge of them, but all the cases I've heard of represent them as beginning with trifles and then increasing in an output of gas, heat, smoke, and the like for weeks before anything serious occurs."

"But it might be otherwise?"

"I doubt it."

"What proof have we that some convulsion far below may not at any moment draw this very section into the crater?"

The suggestion rather staggered me, but I would not admit it. I gave what consolation I could and then returned to my post. The arrangement of the lava chambers was such that I had left no way open for Titicalo to escape by going so short a distance, and she was seated as before when I returned. She did not deign to look at me openly, and I asked for no recognition.

The sisters had given me sharp worry, and I meditated much upon the point. I did not believe we were likely to be overwhelmed by a great outburst of the volcano, but it was a troublesome possibility and I failed to enjoy my thoughts.

An hour later Ben Gustin came and offered to relieve me, and I did not decline his offer, but I did not seek rest then. Having a certain ambition I left the refuge and set out to climb the upper section of the mountain. I wanted to see the central crater.

Climbing, I now and then emerged from the clefts into open area, and when there I had constant evidence that the storm was gathering force. There was no rain, but the wind was driving from the east, and now and then the lightning played sharply along the black belt of clouds that hung far above the horizon. The outlook for our leaving the island by raft on the succeeding night was exceedingly poor. Even if the gale struck sooner than was to be expected, and fell away as suddenly, it would kick up a riot of water that would prevent our going.

As I neared the crater I concentrated my attention, and finally I became aware of a sharp odor of sulphur. This, as I progressed, grew in strength, and I realized that a great change was on with the Fiery One. Before, I had gained the top of the pit easily, but the air grew worse steadily, and, choked and nauseated, I finally paused. To reach the crater was an impossibility, and a breath of pure air became the greatest of blessings to me. Really alarmed for my safety from the poison that stole bitingly into my throat and lungs, I wheeled and hastened away as fast as the dark would permit.

It was a vast relief when I passed the impregnated belt, but my mind was not relieved as easily as my lungs. I had absolute proof that Hatnaro was waking from slumber, that the giant was bursting his bonds, and that the island was likely to be swept by devastating lava again as it had been in the past. Reaching the refuge I aroused Captain Knapp and told him the story.

"So an eruption is on?" he murmured thoughtfully.

"It must be so, sir."

"I wonder if the tidal wave that cast the Happy Ann upon the small island was a preliminary part of a general convulsion of nature in this section? Be that as it may, I think if we ever get away from Hatharo it will be before any great trouble occurs here."

"Does a volcano always give weeks of warning before a violent outbreak?"

"I hope so, but an old sailor once told me he was caught on the outskirts of an earthquake and saw a volcanic mountain fall in without any warning."

"Then it may happen here."

"It is not probable. Anyhow, Tom, we have simply got to stay here. Better be prisoners of the volcano than of the man-eaters."

I had to admit that this was true, but after our troubles already met with, it seemed that we deserved a better fate than to be engulfed in the Fiery One, or burned to death by the flow of boiling lava.

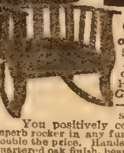
As the forenoon wore along the distant disturbance increased. Rain held off, but the sea ran high and in the east frequent lightning-flashes were followed by peculiar gratings of thunder new even in the experience of old mariners like Seth and Ben.

At times we thought of the half-finished raft we had on the Happy Ann's deck, but it did not appeal to us powerfully. It would be madness to put to sea in such a frail craft with a gale, or worse, hard upon us. There was still some talk about trying to secure a native canoe after things quieted down, but no zeal in that direction. Not knowing how to manage such a thing, we would probably turn over and drown if we tried it.

A few hours before sunset the wind suddenly lulled and was soon only a mere fresh breeze. It had never lashed the sea into a great tumult, and only for the ominous sky we should have felt encouraged. As it was, we held a consultation, but found no man ready to advance a decided opinion.

Something else helped us to a decision. We had just risen to our feet when, sud-

(Continued on page sixteen.)



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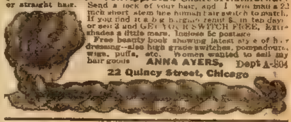

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They are simply a crime—squeeze the rupture, often causing strangulation—dig into the pelvic bone in front—press against the spinal column at the back—make life miserable for nearly everybody who wears them.

The Plain Truth Is This

You can't possibly get **well**—can't even keep from getting **worse**—unless your rupture is constantly **held in place.** Just as a **bandage** or **splint** is the only way a **broken bone** can be held, so is the **right kind of truss** the only thing in the world that can keep a **rupture** from coming out and growing worse.

You'll feel like a **new person** from the day put on **that** kind of truss. And it's easy enough to get—and you can **test** it first—by sixty days' trial—without having to risk a single cent.

It's the famous **Cluthe** Truss or Cluthe **Automatic Massager**—absolutely **guaranteed** to hold, and won't cost you a cent if it doesn't.

It's so utterly different from everything else for rupture that it has received **eighteen separate patents.**

It is **self-regulating, self-adjusting**—it is far **more** than just a truss. In addition to constant **holding** it provides the **only way ever discovered for overcoming the weakness** which is the real **cause of** rupture.

Just **how** it does that—entirely **automatically**—and how it has thus completely cured hundreds and hundreds of people whose cases seemed almost hopeless—is all explained in the free book which the coupon below will bring you.

No Belt—No Leg-Straps—No Springs

The Cluthe Truss does away with the curse of belts, leg-straps, and springs. Thousands say it is as comfortable as their clothing. It is waterproof—will hold in the bath. Also perspiration-proof and easily kept clean.

60 Days Trial to Prove It

We don't ask you to take our word—don't ask you to trust to a mere try-on the way you have to do at a drugstore.

We'll make a Cluthe Automatic Massaging Truss especially for your case—make it to your measure—and let you try it sixty days—

We'll practically **lend** it to you that long—let you make a thorough day-after-day test—without asking you to risk a single cent—

If it doesn't keep your rupture from coming out or bothering you in any way, no matter how hard you work or strain—if it doesn't prove every claim we make—then you can send it back and it won't cost you a penny.

Get World's Greatest Rupture Book

Don't keep on letting yourself get worse—don't spend a cent on account of your rupture until you get our free book of advice.

This remarkable book—cloth-bound, 96 pages, 20 chapters and 23 photographic illustrations—sums up all we have learned about rupture during forty years of experience.

It explains the dangers of operation—and why, if you do manage to live through it, you may have to keep on wearing a truss.

It exposes the humbug "appliances," "methods," "plasters," etc., and shows how old-fashioned elastic trusses are masqueraded under false and misleading names.

It shows why sixty days trial is the only safe way to buy anything for rupture—and how the Cluthe Truss is the only thing **good** enough to **stand** such a long and thorough day-after-day test.

And it tells all about this famous Automatic Massaging Truss—how simple it is—how it ends constant expense—how it has saved thousands from having to be operated on—how you can get it on trial, and how little it costs if you keep it.

Also gives voluntary endorsements from over 5,000 people in all parts of the country.

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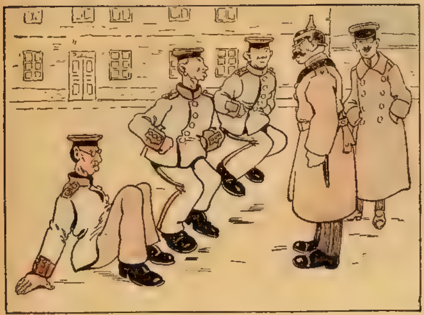


Drill Master (in Germany)—"Now begin again, you idiots! When I say 'one!' bend your knees; 'two!' jump into the air—and wait there until I say 'three!'"

Household Improvements.

Yeast—"I see they are cooking by electricity now?"

Crimsonbeak—"Yes, I noticed that."

"And now an electrically driven machine that weighs less than fifty pounds has been invented to scrub floors."

"Why, if it keeps on a man may have all the comforts of home without getting married!"

◆

Process of Displacement.

"Do you think the automobile will displace the horse?"

"No," replied the reckless driver; "we can't even get the pedestrians off the roads."

Did He Fill It?

"What caused the coolness between you and that young doctor? I thought you were engaged."

"His writing is rather illegible. He sent me a note calling for 10,000 kisses."

"Well?"

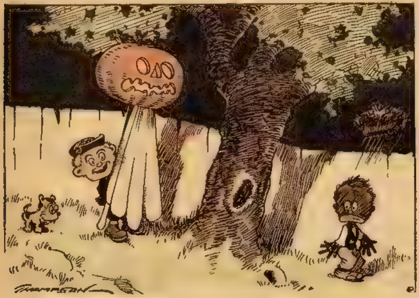
"I thought it was a prescription and took it to the druggist to be filled."

◆

On the Train.

"Mercy, Laura! What do you mean by beginning to write just as soon as the train pulls out?"

"Oh, I'm just writing a post card to my husband telling him we arrived safely."



The Pickaninny—"H-h-honest, Misto' Ghost I neber sed I didn't believe in yo' all!"

Very Little.

Bill—"What he needs is a little backbone."

Jim—"Well, he's got about as little of it as anybody I know."

Abode of Peace.

Mrs. Henpeck—There will be no marriages in the next world.

Mr. Henpeck—"No wonder they call it Heaven."

UP-TO-DATE FARMING.

The auto on the farm arose
Before the dawn at four,
It milked the cows and washed clothes
And finished every chore.

Then forth it went into the field
Just at the break of day
It reaped and thrashed the golden yield
And hauled it all away

It plowed the field that afternoon,
And when the job was through
It hummed a pleasant little tune
And churned the butter, too.

For while the farmer, peaceful-eyed,
Read by the tungsten's glow,
The patient auto stood outside
And ran the dynamo.

◆

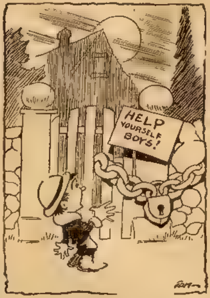
His Busy Day.

Quarryman—"Biddy!"

His Wife—"Phwat do ye want now, sure?"

Quarryman—"Pour some kerosene on th' fire an' make it hot, so Oi can thaw out the dynamite."

◆



HELP YOURSELF BOYS!

Stung.

◆

Seldom at Home.

Stranger (on train)—"A man in your business can't get home very often, I presume."

Drummer—"Home? I should say not. Why, sir, I get home so seldom that I can't remember half the time where I live. Have to telegraph to the firm to send me the address."

Stranger—"You don't say?"

Drummer—"That's straight. Why, one time I was away so long that I forgot I'd ever been married and I took such a fancy to a pretty woman I met in a strange town that I eloped with her."

Stranger—"My! My!"

Drummer—"Yes, it would have been a terrible thing but when I called on the firm during my wedding tour, and introduced her, the old man told me she was my wife before."

◆

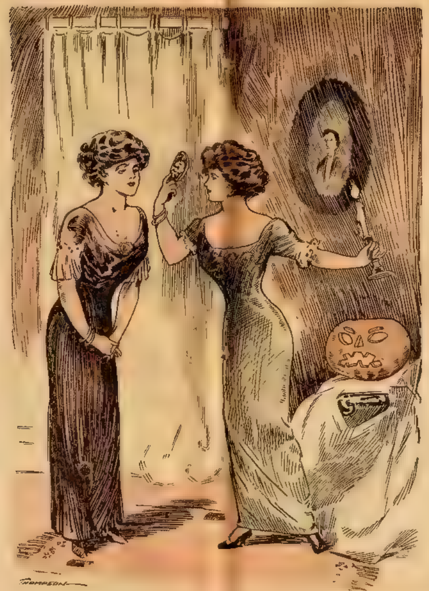
Prepared.

"What are you carrying that lantern around for?"

"I am looking for an honest man," replied Diogenes.

"But why the lantern?"

"Well, you know you can't expect a man of standing to come forward and go to work unless you start in by offering certain spotlight inducements."



Evelyn—"It's like this: Just at the stroke of midnight you hold a mirror before your face and walk around the house backward."

Loraine—"Yes, and then——"

Evelyn—"Well if none of the young men at the party takes the trouble to follow you and look over your shoulder so you can see the face of your future husband, why, that proves that your chances of getting married are extremely remote."

The New Reading.

Miss Mary Garden, lunching with a party of Americans at the open-air restaurant of Armenonville in the Bois de Bologne, condemned a very shocking French dancer.

"From the success this sort of people have," Miss Garden said, "I'd revise the poet's line

"'Clothes make the man, and want of them the woman.'"

◆

The Family Complaint.

"What a nuisance that the circus is so soon to come."

"Why so?"

"Because Tommy has to be taken, of course, and he is such a restless, mischievous child that we'll all have to go to keep him out of danger."

Pessimistic.

"Cheer up. Opportunity may yet knock on your door."

"Shucks! If she ever does, it will be just my luck for her to knock when I am taking a bath."

◆

Destroys Taste.

Friend—Do you like dropped eggs?

Phamly—Yes; I can't enjoy them until they do drop.

Wonderful.

"How well you are looking!"

"Yes. I am a vegetarian."

"That settles it. I shall never eat meat again. How long have you been one?"

"I begin tomorrow."

◆

All He Could Think Of.

Fisherman—"Here comes another dead fish, Pat; the river's full of them. What's the meaning of it?"

Pat—"Sure, I cannot tell at all, at all, sorr, onless it's this terrible fut and mouth disease."

◆

Where?

"Mamma says you hide your age. Do tell me where you put it?"

It Never Failed.

The young man who reads the papers had a choice lower berth in the Pullman.

He had noticed that day the story of the young man who had given up his lower berth to a lady several years before and was remembered in her will to the extent of $98,000.

As he entered the car he heard a woman expostulating with the conductor. There was no berth for her. As she passed the young man she dropped a bankbook. The young man picked it up and quite by accident noticed that it showed a red ink balance of $50,000.

The young man gave the lady the bankbook and his berth in the same sentence.

A little later the woman glanced at the book and smiled.

"It never fails to work," she murmured.

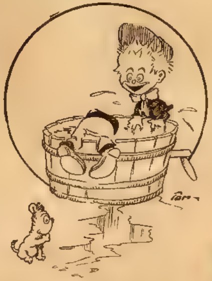
◆

Some Satisfaction.

Stranger—"Suppose a policeman exceeds his authority, and assaults reputable citizens, what redress have you?"

Mr. Gotham—"Well, those of us who get killed have the privilege of swearing at him through a spiritual medium."

◆



"Gee! Willie, you's a great bobber after apples! You kin stay down longer'n any feller I ever saw!"

◆

Keeping the Lunch Dry.

Brewer Corcoran, author of "The Bantam," was recently in the South quail-shooting and engaged Joe, a pickaninny, with elemental conceptions of honesty, to carry the guns and lunch basket. Crossing a bridge made of an old tree trunk, Joe slipped and fell screaming into the creek. When he scrambled ashore, fears were expressed by the hungry sportsmen for the condition of the food. "Did that lunch get wet?" queried one of the party. "No, suh!" "Are you sure?" "Deed ah is." "How did yo' keep it dry?" The boy looked up at the man and grinned. "Ah done et it back yonder."

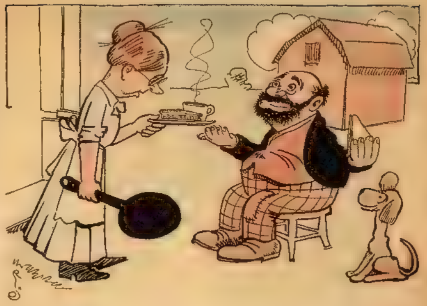
◆

His Preference.

Winkeleby gazed at the new triplets with fatherly pride, but not a little apprehension in his eye, nevertheless.

"What are you thinking of, dear?" asked Mrs. Winkeleby softly.

"Nothing, dear, nothin'," he said faltering, "only don't you think that it would be wiser for us hereafter to build up our little family on the installment plan?"



Kind Lady—"My poor man, how did you come to be known as a pioneer tramp?"

Sandy Pikes—"From eating so much pie, mum."

Exact Cause.

"When I saw Dupley yesterday he looked nervous and run down."

"You guessed it exactly."

"Guessed what?"

"He always was nervous——"

"Yes——"

"And that's how he happened to be run down by an automobile."

◆

Too Late for Him.

Mrs. Naggs—"The papers say new laws are to be passed to make marriage more difficult.

Mr. Naggs—"Huh! Why, in creation didn't they have 'em years ago?"

Not Treasured.

"I hope you are not bringing your children up to worship money, Hawkins," said Dubleigh.

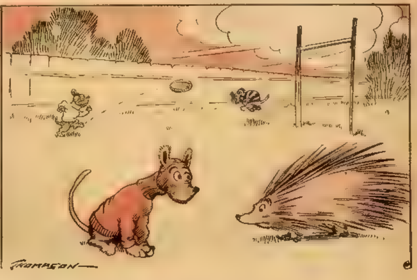
"No, indeed," sighed Hawkins. "Why, Dauh, my children despise money so much that the minute a dollar comes their way they get rid of it as fast as they can."

◆

Got His Freedom.

Sellstraw (tragically)—"So, you tell me to go. And yet I have been your slave."

Muriel (severely)—"And isn't it only right to free a slave?"



Dog (enviously)—"You have fine armor for a football player, Mr. Porcupine, but I guess we can't take you into our eleven."

The Porcupine (bristling up)—"Why not?"

Dog—"You might puncture the ball."

Mainly Here.

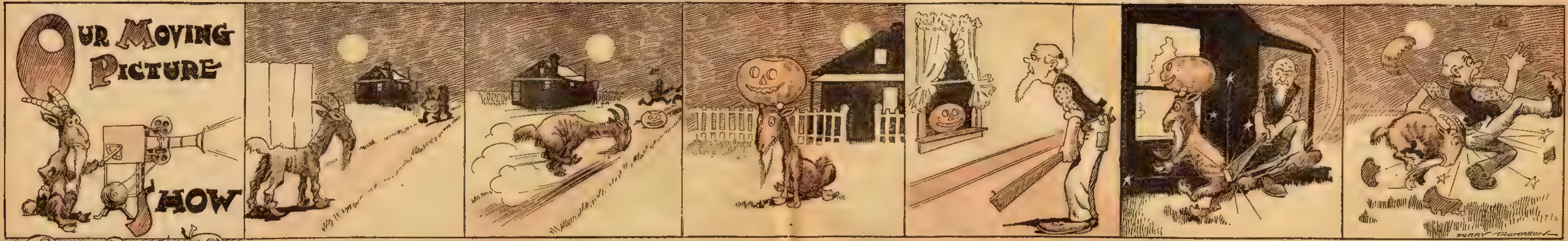
"Do you write for the comic papers?"

"Yes, here and there—I send it there and get it back here."

Fooling a Guest.

"The cyclist who's just come in wants new-laid eggs with his tea. Cackle a bit while I run over to the store."

A HALLOWE'EN ADVENTURE.



Billy Goat—"Wonder what that thing is?"

"I'll try my customary tactics on it and see what happens."

"Well, I've got to do something about this!"

Deacon Crab—"There's them pesky kids agin. I'll go outside and tackle 'em from behind."

"There, darn ye. I reckon that'll larn ye somethin'!"

"Help! Murder! I'm bein' killed!"

The Volcano Prisoners

(Continued from page thirteen.)

denly, the rock beneath us trembled and swayed, and the depths of the mountain gave forth a rumble like and yet unlike thunder. We started nervously and looked one at the other. Then came a fresh oscillation of the great mass, and we fell here and there like fruit from a tree, in some instances piling one upon the other, while a booming, crashing sound filled our ears. No man was injured, and we scrambled up in a panic, while from the inner chamber Mildred and Olive came running.

"The volcano!" gasped the latter. "It will swallow us up!"

"Be calm!" exclaimed Captain Knapp, with admirable composure. "It is over now."

"But it will come again!"

"There is no proof of that. Besides, we are well away from the central crater——"

"I heard the rocks crash somewhere near," added Mildred, her voice shaking, "and the floor of our room tipped far down!"

"I am sure we need not worry, but as it is already growing dusk outside we will risk nothing here. Men, gather up what is necessary, and we will descend to the foot of the mountain. After that we can go to the Happy Ann at our leisure."

A harsh laugh burst upon us, and we looked and saw Titicalo back of the sisters, wholly free from alarm and mocking our trepidation. We gave her no heed then, but seized upon our most valuable articles and began a hasty flight. A few hundred feet we went, and then paused in consternation. The cleft we had always used was barred by a solid rock which had fallen and blocked the path, and no way past it was to be seen. We were shut into the heart of the volcano!

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE EARTHQUAKE.

The flickering light of the lantern fell upon a startled, dismayed group as we faced that impassable wall of rock. With the volcano threatening us with instant death we were shut into its heart.

"Trapped!" muttered one of the sailors.

Seth Styles picked up a stone and vainly beat upon the great mass that had fallen, hoping the barrier might be thin, while I was vaguely conscious that Mildred was clinging to my arm—a feeble defense, then.

Steve Radd was first to arouse, and, believing he knew of another avenue out, he led us that way. We went some rods and met with another wall of rock. By that time Captain Knapp was moved to great energy, and, declaring there must be some way of escape, he gave orders and we scattered for immediate search.

Ten minutes later we met again, baffled, nearly desperate. Knapp, after one glance at the Parish sisters, contracted his brows and looked thoughtfully at the floor, painfully seeking for a plan. The pause was broken by Titicalo, who had followed us, the only really calm person there. Pushing to the front she spoke evenly.

"It does not please me to give help to such a wretched lot as I see here, but I have some regard for my own life. I don't want to be swallowed up in the burning depths of Hatharo, for an eruption is surely coming. I think I can guide you out. I know of a passage which I think is still clear, for I caught a gust of fresh air as we passed it. I'll guide you on one condition—you must swear that when we are free from here I shall go my way, and alone."

"You really think you can find a way?" Knapp demanded.

"Unless it is blocked. That, however, is not the question The point is, do you swear to let me loose if I guide you out?"

"If things are as she says," exclaimed Jim Brown, "why can't we back-track an' find that gust of air for ourselves, an' them bump ourselves an' get clear? I say do it, an' hang on to the woman cannibal!"

Titicalo flashed him a look that was fit to kill, but she ended by smiling scornfully and falling into silence. Jim's idea had gone home, however, and we renewed our search. We might as well have saved ourselves the trouble, for we found nothing. All hands were reluctant to free the queen, for we knew she had only to return to her village and set the natives upon us; but a second shuddering of the mountain reminded us that the volcano slept only transiently and we grew less obstinate.

Our captain consulted with Seth at one side, and their talk ended with a remark from Knapp that he did not feel he could refuse when the Parish sisters were in such great danger. He went to Titicalo again.

"We will acept your offer," he announced, "but with a string attached to it. We will liberate you at daybreak."

"I refuse your plan!" the queen retorted sharply. "I go free as soon as we reach the base of the mountain or never. Take your pick!"

"In that case, will you promise not to make war upon us tonight?"

Really, he valued her pledge as nothing, but he was doing his best to improve a hard bargain.

"I promise nothing!" she declared stubbornly.

"Do you want to die in Hatharo?"

"I shall have the satisfaction of knowing you die also."

They regarded each other with bitter hostility, but Seth broke in after a few seconds had passed in idleness.

"Sir, an' you, queen ma'am, I don't think we can afford to stand pitchin' pennies while this here volcano is gettin' ready to swaller us inter its stomach. Give way a bit, both on ye, an' all live to see the blessed sun rise termorrer. As for attackin' on us with her natives, sir, we have a ship full o' guns, pikes, lances, top-mauls, belayin'-pins, an' the like that would beat off every islander here. Them weapons are better than anybody's promise."

This sturdy speech from the veteran decided the skipper at once.

"Lead the way to freedom," he said curtly, addressing the queen, "and you shall go where you will, and at once. I make but one condition—you shall lead us immediately."

Titicalo sneered at him perceptibly and tossed her head, but she answered no word and turned away with a gesture. We followed, and after a brief journey she turned into what seemed only an alcove, but, once there, we caught the breath of fresh air. Going within we doubled a point of rock and found an overlooked cleft. We pursued it hastily, and in a few minutes came out on the mountainside. Never before had the air of the heavens seemed so grateful.

Wasting no words, but giving our help to the sisters, we made for the level land below. We saw nothing then to alarm us The sky was barely clouded in the west, but the east was a bank of black except when lightning shimmered along the pall. A strange sultriness was abroad, and a vague realization that some further calamity impended was shared by all, but we avoided worrying each other.

When the foot of the volcano was reached we noticed what we had forgotten, that Titicalo was still with us Knapp hesitated and was about to address her, but she broke in upon his first syllable.

"I am done with you now. Don't think I brought you out of the Fiery One because I pitied you, for it was only to save my own life. Now my business is to seek your lives, and I'll go to my people and set them upon you. Look out for me! You would have found the volcano kinder than I'll be!"

So saying, she wheeled and started away. It was in my mind to disregard our promise and detain her forcibly, but Seth spoke cheerfully. Repeating that we could hold the ship against all her followers he caused a delay, and so she drifted out of sight.

We resumed our journey, walking now beneath sturdy trees, and had made half our course to the ship when we were checked. Again, as when in the volcano, we felt the ground quiver under our feet, while a thunderlike boom issued from Hatharo. Half of our number lost their feet and the others stood with difficulty, but the further result surprised us. Human life became astir among the trees and men ran to and fro, crying out loudly and in terror.

"The natives!" exclaimed Luke. "Get your pistols ready, mates!"

Each of us instinctively carried out his suggestion, but it quickly dawned upon us that we need not fear then. The previous tremors of the earth had doubtless driven the cannibals to cover, and they were far more alarmed than we. Some passed so close that we could almost have touched them, but they did not seem to notice that we were not of their race. Still crying out, they ran about aimlessly, though never quitting the vicinity.

Captain Knapp urged us on and we went willingly. Quickly leaving the barbarians behind, we hastened toward the lesser island. By that time it was clear to me that what we had to dread was not a volcanic outburst but an earthquake. Hatharo showed no light at its summit, and I could detect no ascending smoke. There was no tranquility to be had from this fact. A lava flow from the Fiery One would travel slowly and could be avoided, perhaps, but an earthquake might be far-reaching and overwhelm all hands. It seemed to be absolutely necessary that we should get away from the island in some sort of craft, and, unfortunately, our raft was not yet completed.

When we reached the cliff that fronted on the patch of land where the Happy Ann lay stranded we looked with eagerness The outlying sea was calmer than when we were previously there, though the flow through the strait had not lessened. The ship was, as far as we could see, free from human tenants.

We descended the cliff, and, aiding Mildred and Olive, swam the bisecting current and gained the smaller island. As I drew myself to what I thought was firm land, my feet splashed in water several inches deep, from which I then argued that the waves of the strait had overrun the land during the late shocks.

The ship mournful enough in her deplorable situation, was yet glad to our eyes, and we ran toward the dark hull. Only a few steps had we taken, however, when a screeching sounded from her deck and spears began to whistle past. Fresh calamity was with us.

"The cannibals are in the ship!" exclaimed Seth.

"The rail is black with heads!" added Steve.

"Say, but that's tough!" groaned Jim Brown. "Our last hope was in that raft, an' now we are blocked off. There is a pile o' heathen aboard. What's to be done?"

CHAPTER XVII.

FIGHTING FOR LIFE.

Captain Knapp was the last person to speak, but he spoke to the point.

"Men," he exclaimed, "our one hope lies in that half-completed raft, and the only way to get it is by boarding the ship and overcoming those heathen. The hanging ladder and broken bulwark will give us places to climb. Shall we attack?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" we replied in hearty chorus.

We did attack. We swarmed up the

(Continued on page twenty.)

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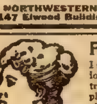

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Ninety-Three or Nineteen Twelve

WE STAND at political cross-roads. The sign boards are clearly worded. We are the deciders of our fate for the next four years. Is it to be success or depression?

* * *

You have before you three candidates. Of the three:

Only one, Mr. Taft, has had the courageous strength to show where he stands on the tariff.

Only one, Mr. Taft, has taken the pains to attempt to produce a tariff law which would be just to the manufacturer and the consumer alike.

Only one, Mr. Taft, has tried to take the tariff out of politics, and get it on a fair protective basis—a basis resting upon facts.

Only one, Mr. Taft, has had the fearless strength to stand alone in the face of political demands, as well as popular demands, and refuse to O. K. tariff bills which he knew would bring disastrous results.

Only one, Mr. Taft, has been far-seeing statesman enough, to recognize that the control of monopoly could come only through the control of the patents which make this monopoly possible.

Only one, Mr. Taft, has gone direct to the heart of the matter, and proposed patent laws which would cure the evils of monopoly by removing the cause.

Only one, Mr. Taft, has *proven* himself the just judge, by calmly surveying the monopoly situation and putting his hands, backed by means of a cure, on the failings which the workings of the Sherman law have brought out.

* * *

Each one of these candidates stands at a cross-road.

Each one is pointing to one of the signboards.

Which road will you take?

* * *

On the board above Professor Wilson we read the warning against theory,—the untried, questionable dreams of the impractical theorist.

Alongside it is the warning: Remember 1893-1896.

Remember these four years, when not less than 3,000,000 men were out of employment.

Remember that when these men were marching up and down the land, eating at free soup houses, the money they were *not earning* was the money the farmers of this country were *not getting*.

Remember the fact that this lack of employment, this Democratic rule, cost the people fully four and one-half billion dollars —much more than the entire cost of the Civil War.

* * *

The learned Professor, in his request of you, the American Farmer, for your support, presents as his platform the same "Tariff For Revenue Only" principle, which caused the disastrous four years in the middle nineties.

He has worked out beautifully spun theories. But in reality here is what the Professor offers for your acceptance.

We quote from history; the history of the last Democratic administration:—

Bank failures throughout the country, as many as ten failures in one day. Collapse of commission houses. The Chemical Bank, one of the largest in the country, unable to fill its weekly orders for currency.

Encounter between anarchists and socialists.

Fifty million dollar Government bond issue to meet conditions. Ten thousand miners strike in Ohio. Property destroyed in Pennsylvania by striking miners. New York silk factories closed.

Riotous meeting of workmen in Boston. General strike among the silk weavers. Railroad bridges burned, and other riotous acts by miners in West Virginia. Troops ordered to Cripple Creek, Colorado, to suppress mining troubles.

Coxey's Army formed to march on Washington. Coxey's Army a terror to farmers of the West.

Governor of South Carolina declares martial law.

Men killed and wounded in Pennsylvania coke riots. United Mine Workers strike.

Attempted demonstration of Coxey's army on steps of Capitol. Members of army arrested for holding up railway train.

Farm products find no market. Farmers in financial difficulties.

* * *

But why continue? The fact remains that this is the only past history to which the Professor can "point with pride" as a promise of what his theories will develop in the future.

* * *

A loud noise distracts your attention to a second cross road.

Wild claims, resonant epithets, circus antics form the side-show of the campaign.

Here, gentlemen, is the road-way of *Promises* but no *fulfillment*. Anything you can think of, just ask for it.

It makes no difference how impossible or impractical the fulfilling of the promise may be—you'll be told your wants will be carried out.

The Jester, with his tinkling bells, has followed his cap into the ring.

The menagerie, fresh from the wilds, is with us.

Gentlemen, here is the Third Termer.

The way is impossible, hence,

A vote cast in favor of this road, is just as fully a vote cast for the road of the theorist, the Professor. A vote cast for the nightmare of eighteen ninety-three.

* * *

But here is a third road. The signboard is painted with fresh accomplishments.

No megaphone calls your attention. No "barker" stands in front calling on you to come inside.

The one appeal made to you is the statement of deeds well done.

Here is the record of what the Tariff Board tried to accomplish, and would have effected but for the obstruction of unfavorable Democrats in the political House.

Here is a $58,000,000 deficit changed into a $30,000,000 surplus.

Here is the central idea of Mr. Taft's Tariff plan—a plan as simple, as clear as sunshine. Namely:

—Base the tariff on the facts and figures which show the exact difference between foreign and home cost of production.

—Forget the political demands of office holders or favored interests. Take the tariff out of politics and place it on the solid foundation of real protection of home industry.

Here is the record of a calm, judicious, fearless man who neglected his *political* opportunity, that he might save the country from immeasurable loss.

Here is the record of the Wool Bill, vetoed because it would have crippled the American Wool Industry.

Here is the record of the president who promised Tariff Revision, and has accomplished an average of 4½ per cent revision *downward*.

This in face of the charge by his opponents that the tariff is higher than ever.

The figures of the Payne law, after 35 months of operation, show this 4½ per cent *below* the Dingley law.

Here is the record of the man who, by wise administration of tariff and trade laws, has fostered industrial conditions, until the prosperity of the country has reached a height never before equalled.

Here are the figures which show an enormous increase in land values,—in farm products:

Figures showing manufacturing products nearly doubled.

Here is the story of the President who, recognizing that our future welfare depends largely on a prosperous, growing farm community, has encouraged and supported the study of soil and crop conditions as essential to national prosperity.

* * *

A wise statesman once said:

"The man the people laugh at, they don't make President."

The chair of the President is a position of calm, dispassionate dignity. The Chief Executive of our land should be one who is an index to the position the nation holds in the councils of the world.

Jest has its place,—but it is not in the controlling of our national destinies.

Sport, the hale and hearty, happy-go-lucky atmosphere of the outdoor life, has a peculiar hold on the fancies of most men. But the government of this country cannot be successfully run on the rules of a Wild-West show.

Theory is pleasant for some to study out —it is a means of mind development. But theory, unproved by practice, is too dangerous when the welfare of a hundred million people is at stake.

* * *

The strongest recommendation which the Taft administration has, is that its actions looking to country-wide prosperity have been carried out quietly, smoothly, almost without a knowledge that things were being done.

When you have a field to be plowed, do you jump from one thing to another, plowing, feeding the cattle, hustling here and there,—yelling, cracking a whip, and making a general hullaballoo? Not much! You wouldn't accomplish much if you did!

You start a furrow and you plow until that furrow or the entire field is finished.

Would you employ a farm hand who spent his time in telling about the theory of farming? Or would you get the man who *farmed*,—who did things?

Vote as you run your farm.

* * *

Gentlemen, we stand at political cross-roads.

On one side is a road abandoned sixteen years ago. It was rocky, it was full of chuckle holes, and mud patches.

The dust of sixteen years has smoothed the surface somewhat. The broom of theory has pushed a little sand into the holes, and the rocks have become covered with moss.

But underneath it all is the same disastrous going,—the impossible driving of old.

* * *

On another side is a zig-zag road, and smiling, smooth-tongued politicians are calling you by your first name, slapping you on the back, and telling you what a jolly good time awaits you on this road of empty promises.

* * *

The third road is the road you are now travelling. It has led you, quietly, but surely, into the land of prosperity and big values.

It has put the country on a height of wealth it never approached before.

Which road will you take?

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE.
Charles D. Hilles, *Chairman.*
James B. Reynolds, *Secretary.*

Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879

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Back numbers of the Ledger can be had by addressing this office. Always give the numbers desired, plainly written, accompanied by your full address, and your order will receive prompt attention. Price 5 cents per copy.

BEWARE OF STRANGERS.

The Ledger employs no traveling agents to solicit subscriptions, and every person working in that capacity is a fraud No person is authorized to take subscriptions for the Ledger unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been appointed agents to sell this paper every week A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable us to arrest and convict such persons as are now traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of the Ledger and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

ADVERTISING.

Advertising rate $2.25 per Agate Line, per insertion for advertisements in the The Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

1,000,000

COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS.

Dead dogs wag no tails.

And a good many blondes are unfair.

Much feeding also maketh a man full.

One interested listener an orator has is himself.

He who lends money without security borrows trouble.

Kleptomaniacs will take almost anything but a hint.

Debt is a temple that has more entrances than exits.

Women lean toward mystery, but men lean toward mastery.

A much admired girl doesn't always make an admirable wife.

A slight puff will send a feather-brained man up in the air.

Get the better of yourself before some other fellow beats you to it.

The fellow who is cornered doesn't think he's getting a square deal.

The only embarrassment the average man ever feels is of the financial brand.

Surely he is a wise man who knows when he has enough before he gets it.

Nothing pleases a grandmother more than to have a man say she doesn't look it.

It is seldom necessary for a man who is as regular as clock work to live on tick.

When a boy begins to state his side of the case he is accused of "talking back."

A pleasure, like a pipe, may be a solace to one man and a nuisance to others.

If a man gives you a square deal in a horse trade you can trust him anywhere.

Occasionally a man has nothing to say on a subject because he knows all about it.

Small favors are always thankfully received, but often unthankfully remembered.

It's rude in a guest to look at the initials on borrowed spoons and ask what they stand for.

In addition to the criticism he is entitled to, every man gets a lot that he can't account for.

A baby yells because something worries it, but a college youth yells because he hasn't any better sense.

If some people were to accept your offer of a penny for their thoughts, you would probably get the short end of the deal.

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Want and Classified Advertising not less than 14 words accepted for insertion in the Ledger and Blade at 25 cents per word.

AGENTS WANTED

$250.00 paid for distributing 2,000 free packages Perfumed Soap Powder in your town. Men or women. No money required. B. W. Ward & Co., 1770 Berteau ave., Chicago.

AGENTS! Everybody's Doing It!! Send $10. Get new 36-lb. Feather Bed with 6-lb. pair Pillows Free. Freight prepaid on all. New Feathers. Best Ticking. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Good chance for live agent. Write today. Reference, Commercial National Bank. Turner & Cornwall, Dep't G, Charlotte, N. C.

$2.50 per day paid man or woman in each town to distribute free circulars and take orders for concentrated flavoring in tubes. J. S. Ziegler Co., 443 South Dearborn st., Chicago.

WANTED—Agents to sell rich looking imported 36x68 rugs. $1 each. R. H. Carter, Milan, Tenn., sold 115 in four days. His profit $51. You can do as well. Write for sample offer and unique selling plan. Exclusive territory. Condon, Importer, Stonington, Maine.

FREE—"Investing For Profit" Magazine. Send me your name and I will mail you this magazine absolutely free. Before you invest a dollar anywhere get this magazine—it is worth $10 a copy to any man who intends to invest $5 or more per month. Tells you how $1,000 can grow to $22,000—how to judge different classes of investments, the real earning power of your money. This magazine six months free, if you write today. H. L. Barber, Publisher, 453, 28 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

$7.00 per 100 in cash. Collecting names and addresses. Nothing to sell. Stamp for free proposition. United Advertising Co., Dep t A., Lagrande, Texas.

NEW Sterling Shoe Cleaner. Agents Bonanza. Automatically cleans mud, snow and dust from heel to toe on grown person or child's shoe in one operation. Profit actually 100%. Capable agents apply for exclusive agency. Hilker Mop Co., 1230 Grand ave., Chicago.

M. O. Dealers and Agents—1,000 High Grade, Colored, Embossed Post Cards, express prepaid for only $1.00—6,000 for $5.00. Scenic, comic, floral or assorted. Send at once before supply is exhausted. Satisfaction or money refunded. Address, C. K. Wyatt & Co., Box 3258, Conway, South Carolina.

AGENTS—Get particulars of one of the best paying propositions ever put on the market Something no one else sells. Can make $4,000 yearly. E. M. Feltman, Sales Manager, 6164 Sycamore St., Cincinnati, O.

GARTSIDES, Iron Rust Soap—Big Money selling Iron Rust Soap; removes rust, ink and all unwashable stains; agents and store salesmen wanted; in tubes at 25c. retail. Address Greene Supply Co., 7014 Frankstown ave., Pittsburgh, Pa.

AGENTS—Ten Calls an Hour; Profit $3.70; work 5 hours, make $18.50; outfit for demonstration free; fall leader. Freeman Supply Co., Dep't "A." Bath, N. Y

AGENTS Wanted—It costs nothing to give our line a trial, as we furnish you book of samples, catalogue, etc., FREE, and pay all express charges on your orders; dress goods, embroideries, suits, skirts, etc.—now is the time to begin—write now. Embroidery and Import Company, 1901 Pine St., St. Louis, Mo.

MONEY by Mail. Start a mail order business, or manage an agency for me, printed matter furnished for half the profits. Write for particulars. Hazen A. Horton, Desk 701, Tekonsha, Mich.

ESTABLISHED Guaranteed Stock and Poultry Remedys. Large Profits; Exclusive territory. Washington Food & Chemical Co., Cleveland, Ohio.

MISCELLANEOUS

TYPEWRITERS $10—$40. Every make. Rented, Payments. Phonographs $5. Motorcycles. Knight's, 201 12th St., St. Louis, Mo.

AUTOMOBILES

PUT an Air-Friction Carburetor on your car. Start easy in cold weather. Save one-third gas. Add one-third power. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Half price until January 1. Air-Friction Carburetor Co., Dayton, Ohio.

HELP WANTED

25 CENTS each for names of whiskey drinkers. Take all you send. Blanks 10 cents. Oro Company, Leroy, Mich.

BIG Profits—Open a dyeing and cleaning establishment, little capital needed. We teach by mail. Booklet free. Ben-Vonde System, Dep't 2-A, Charlotte, N. C.

FREE Illustrated Book tells about over 360,000 protected positions in U. S. service. More than 40,000 vacancies every year. There is a big chance here for you, sure and generous pay, lifetime employment. Easy to get. Just ask for booklet A 1034. No obligation. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

SONG Poems Wanted. New Plan. Big Money. Free Book tells all. Hayworth Music Co., 655 G, Wash., D. C.

TOILET Goods. Make and sell them yourself. Large Profits. Write for Particulars. Red Cross Laboratories, 505 Cambridge Bldg., Chicago.

BIG Money—Start a Cleaning, Dyeing, Pressing Business; very little capital needed; we teach latest methods by mail; write for free book, "Opportunity." Sourbeer School, D-2, Parsons, Kansas.

LEARN the Barber Trade. Few weeks completes. We control many excellent positions. Tools given. Branches in all leading cities. For information regarding any one, write Dept. 10, Moler College, 738 South Wabash ave., Chicago, Ill

WANTED—Men and Women; For Government Positions. $80.00 month. Annual vacations. Short hours. No "layoffs." Common education sufficient. Over 12,000 appointments coming. Influence unnecessary. Farmers eligible. Send postal immediately for free list of positions open. Franklin Institute, Dep't E 31, Rochester, N. Y.

MAKE your spare time pay—earn money on the side, $10 00 to $ 5.00 weekly. Particulars free. John Heid, Treasurer, Womans Temple, Chicago.

WANTED—A man or woman, all or spare time, to secure information for us. Experience not necessary. Nothing to sell. Good Pay. Send stamp for particulars. Address M. S. I. A., Indianapolis, Indiana.

MALE HELP WANTED

I WILL Start You earning $4 daily at home in spare time, silvering mirrors; no capital; free instructive booklet, giving plans of operation. G. F. Redmond, Dep't 400, Boston, Mass.

$40.00 Weekly Selling our Fruit Trees. Small Fruits. Ornamentals. Beginners instructed. Pennurco, Girard, Pa.

$50.00 TO $100.00 A MONTH For your spare time——Experience not needed. Want active man each locality. Benefits for sickness, injury, death. Write quick. I-L-U 764, Covington, Ky.

FARMS FOR SALE

FRUIT LANDS—Beautiful Kootenay Valley, B. C., 88 acres, sub-divided into 3 4-acre tracts, 11 of 5-acres and one of 25 acres. The 25-acre tract is improved, has dwelling, stable, ice-house, etc. All for a limited time at the low price of $6,000. Adjoining land held at $200 per acre. Will cost you nothing to write and investigate. Owner forced to realize thereon. ¼ cash, balance easy terms. Only six hours from Spokane, Wash. Pure water, ideal climate and very low taxes. Address D. B. Dulmage, Morgan Park, Illinois.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

DRINK HABIT—Guaranteed home treatment three days—lifelong result. The only reliable. Book mailed free. Edw. J. Woods, 534 Sixth avenue, M 356, New York. N. Y.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES can make shields at home; $10 per 100; work sent prepaid to reliable women. Particulars for stamped addressed envelope. Eureka Co., Dep't 17, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

MAKE a comfortable living at home sewing plain seams. Any ordinary sewing machine. All home work. No canvassing. Steady. Sewers wanted in each town. No triflers reply. State how much time can sew. Send ten cents for postage, samples, etc. Returned if not satisfactory. Home Sewers Company, New York Jobbers Sewing, "BL" Dept., Rehoboth, Delaware.

MUSICAL

SONG Poems Wanted—Publication secured. Satisfaction guaranteed. D.-E. Stoeckel, Mus. Bac., East Alton, Ill.

BIG Money Writing Songs or Music. Write for Free Booklet, explaining how your work can be arranged, copyrighted and published Free. J. E. Minnick Co., Inc., Music Publishers, 1611 7th St., Wash., D. C.

PERSONAL

MARRY, thousands wealthy, anxious for early marriage, descriptions free. Confidential, 268 Market st., San Francisco, Calif.

MARRIAGE Paper—Highest Character; Incorporated; 16th year; 3,000 members; paper sealed; send 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1600, Denver, Colo.

MARRY—Many rich, congenial and anxious for companions. Interesting. Particulars and photos free. The Messenger, Jacksonville, Fla.

FUTURE told, also past. Send 10c and birthdate. Prof. Edwards, 2854 West Madison St, Chicago.

FREE Reading by trance medium. Send date of birth—dime. Dr. Eagle, Saginaw, Michigan

MARRY—Catalogue with photos and descriptions Free. Pay if suited. Select Club. Dep't 674, Tekonsha, Mich.

LOVINE never fails. Every package guaranteed. Either sex 10c. Two packages sealed 20c. Union, Box 100N, Palatine Illinois

LOVERS' Guide, or An Easy Road to Marriage tells "How to Court a Bashful Girl," "How to Woo an Heiress," "How a Lady Should Manage Her Beau to Make Him Propose Marriage," "How to Catch a Rich Bachelor," "Love Letters," "How to Win the Favor of Ladies," "Wedding Etiquette," &c., &c. All subjects treated in a manner that will be found most helpful to Lovers. This Great Book sent Postpaid for only 10c or 3 for 25c. Teel Book Co., Hurleyville, N. Y.

MARRY wealth and beauty. Marriage Directory Free. Pay when married. New plan. Ladies send description in first letter. Box 314 C., Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—Many rich, anxious for early marriage, descriptions free, sealed. Pay if suited. The Exchange, Box 525 D, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—Photos, descriptions and P. O. addresses of pretty, rich ladies and gents, want to marry, free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

MARRIAGE Paper Free; best published for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

MARRY Rich—Matrimonial paper of highest character, containing hundreds of photos and descriptions of marriageable people with means; mailed free, sealed; either sex. Write. One may be your ideal. Standard Cor. Club, Box 607, Grays Lake, Illinois.

YOU Can Marry Well and Wisely by following my private instructions. Not a matrimonial agency or paper. Others are making brilliant marriages; why not you? Particulars sealed, free. Ask for Leaflet No. 1. L. McDonnell, The Windsor, Washington, D. C.

HEIRS Wanted. 50,000 estates unclaimed. Full facts in booklet I. Send stamp. International Claim Agency, Pittsburgh, Pa.

He Laughed Last.

A young man was sitting in the Grand Central Depot the other day, holding a baby in his arms, when the child began to cry so lustily as to attract the attention of every one around him. By and by a waiting passenger walked over to him with a smile of pity on his face and said:

"A woman gave you that baby to hold while she went to see about her baggage, didn't she?"

"Yes."

"Ha! ha! ha! I tumbled to the fact as soon as I saw you. You expect her back. I suppose?"

"Of course."

"Ha! ha! ha! This is rich! Looking for her every minute, aren't you?"

"Yes, and I think she'll come back."

"Well, this makes me laugh—ha! ha! ha! I had a woman play that same trick on me in a Chicago depot once, but no one ever will again. Young man, you've been played on for a hayseed. I would advise you to turn that baby over to a policeman and get out of here before some newspaper reporter gets hold of you."

"Oh, she'll come back, she'll come back."

"She will, eh? The joke grows richer and richer. Now what makes you think she'll come back?"

"Because she's my wife and this is our baby."

"Oh—um—I see," muttered the fat man, who got over feeling tickled all at once, and, seeing a dog that a farmer had tied to one of the seats with a piece of clothesline, he went over and gave it three swift kicks.

* * *

Halloween Mission.

Several residents of Hamilton Park were given a reminder on Halloween night last year of the old saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Shortly after six o'clock a man about 65 years of age heavily muffled and carrying a large stick in one hand, started patrolling the the sidewalk before a vacant lot in Stewart avenue across from the Hamilton Park station of the Rock Island Railroad. He would pace up and down the walk for a while and then stop and gaze in a meditative sort of way into the darkening lot.

About eight o'clock the neighbors began to get curious, and many walked out to interrogate the lonely watcher. After a few words with him they would go away smiling.

Five young men were helping Gerald R. Rearick, celebrate the evening, and they became curious as to the man's business.

"I'll tell you what we will do," said Rearick. "We each will wager a cigar on our guess, and we will find out from the fellow himself just why he is there."

Accordingly he collected five cigars and one cigarette. Then with the host as leader the party filed out and demanded of the man what he was doing.

"Well," he said, "I ain't a burglar, a yeggman or a porch climber. I ain't going to bother anybody, but I am going to be here until early morning. You see that big sign there?" He pointed to a wooden signboard about eighteen feet square standing in the center of the lot.

"That sign would cost twenty-five dollars if torn down tonight by marauding boys. I am expecting three dollars in the morning if that sign is still standing, and you can bet it will be."

* * *

Dropped His H's.

During Gladstone's last contest for the university, in the days of public voting, Professor Smith was one of the tellers. A certain don who never could manage his h's wanted to vote for the Tory candidates, Sir William Heathcôte and Gathorne Hardy, but lost his head and said: "I vote for Glad——," then suddenly correcting himself, exclaimed, "I mean for 'Eathcote and 'Ardy." Thereupon Smith said: "I claim that vote for Gladstone." "But," said the vice-chancellor, "the voter did not finish your candidate's name," "That is true," said Smith, "but then he did not even begin the other two."

* * *

Felt Anxious.

A New York judge went over to Ireland recently and met the brother of Tom Costigan, a well-known district leader in one wing of the democracy. The judge told Tom's brother in Ireland all about what a great man Tom had become, about his popularity, influence, and devotion to politics. The brother, instead of sharing the judge's enthusiasm, looked anxious. "Before you go," he said, "please satisfy me on one point. Isn't all this attention to politics interfering with my brother's business?"

* * *

Free Asthma and Hay Fever Cure.

D. J. Lane, a chemist at 115 Lane Bldg., St. Marys, Kansas, manufactures a remedy for asthma and hay fever in which he has so much confidence that he sends a $1 bottle by express to any one who will write him for it. His offer is that he is to be paid for it if it cures, and the one taking the treatment is to be the judge.

—Advertisement.

* * *

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

—Advertisement.

On Halloween.

Times have changed so in recent years, writes Richard Henry Little in the Chicago Tribune, that old-fashioned games and institutions so long associated with this ancient festival should be brought strictly up to date. City life and the prevalence of flats have rendered many witty sports of our childhood quite impractical.

A few years ago one of the cutest things imaginable on Halloween was to take a nice, big gate from its hinges and drag it a half mile to a bonfire, where it made a beautiful blaze and contributed so much to the happiness of rollicking youthful hearts. This pretty custom cannot be observed in Chicago because flats have no gates. Of course, the front doors could be taken off and would probably burn as well as the old time gates, but landlords and janitors of the present day are of a cross and peevish disposition and refuse to enter into the gladsome, gaysome festival of Halloween.

A pretty custom on Halloween is that of throwing apple parings over the left shoulder to find out what fate has in store. The girl who wishes to tear away the veil of the future by means of the little strip of apple peeling stands in front of a candle and says these words:

"Apple peeling on the floor,
Tell my fate I now implore."

She then takes the apple peeling by the tail and hurls it over her left shoulder. Now examine the apple peeling carefully and see if it spells the magical word "R-e-n-o."

Bobbing for apples is a favorite old time custom of Halloween. Under the present high price of living, however, this is too expensive an amusement, except for the idle rich. In place of apples one may use potatoes or rutabagas or even the common garden onion. You put the potato or onion or whatever you employ in the bathtub, which is filled even full of lukewarm water. Now let your guests with their hands tied behind their backs try to grasp the potato or onion with their teeth.

Zest will be added to the game if you do not serve your guests with any refreshments and postpone the potato bobbing until one or two o'clock in the morning. If you do this, employ a baked potato with a little melted butter and some salt and pepper in the middle of it and your guests will plunge headforemost into the bathtub and dive to the bottom in their mad desire to get a bite of the potato.

This amusing game can be made even more exciting, if you throw a piece of pie or a nice piece of beefsteak into the tub and let the guests bob for it. Remember, however, that to insure great interest in this sport, the guests must not be fed during the evening. Otherwise they act languidly when you suggest the game and say, "Oh, piffle, that's no fun."

Another custom on Halloween popular with young women and one that has the most enthusiastic approval of the medical fraternity is to get a lighted candle and walk in your bare feet around the block six times at midnight. Then go into the house and look into a mirror over your left shoulder.

You will invariably see there the face of your future husband unless pneumonia, engenderd by prowling around outdoors at midnight in your bare feet, carries you off before you have a chance to get to the altar.

If the face in the mirror has whiskers or is chewing cloves the beautiful lady in the Trilbys and with the candle in the left hand will murmur:

"Save me, jinks, and set me free,
From what the fates have wished on me."

The face in the mirror will immediately fade away and then you can do another barefoot parade around the block and do it all over again until satisfied.

This game is no longer popular because the looking glass only reveals the face of the future husband and not his pocketbook. Still, it is interesting.

The young man who wants to see his future wife in the mirror has to go through the same general course of procedure outlined above. He gets out of bed at midnight, clad only in baby blue pajamas, and walks around the block in his bare feet with the lighted candle held in his left hand. If a policeman speaks to him it is a sign he will soon take a long journey over to the West Side to the psychopathic ward of the Detention Hospital. If he returns in safety to his room he must back in carefully and say:

"Tell me fates, shall I end my life.
Show me she who will be my wife."

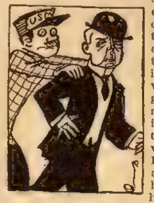
Looking backward over his left shoulder he will observe the face of his future wife. If the lady in the looking-glass squints or chews a toothpick you can get a transfer by standing three minutes on the right leg and repeating seven times:

"Oh, from such a wife as she,
Please, kind jinks, deliver me."

If the young man is brave and venturesome he can see the face of his future mother-in-law in the mirror by looking over his right shoulder and holding his breath. This is a feat, however, that even the most foolhardy seldom attempt. A physician and an ample supply of stimulants should be within call.

ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

No Strangers Allowed.



Frank H. Hitchcock, the Postmaster-General of the United States, takes the deepest interest in even the smallest details of the postal service. One evening he was at the Union Station in Washington, when he decided to go into one of the railway mail-service cars to see how the mail matter was being handled. Being a tall man and very athletic, he easily swung himself from the platform into the car, but he did not find it an easy matter to stay put. A burly postal clerk grabbed him by the shoulders, propelled him toward the side door, and practically ejected him to the platform below.

"What do you mean by that?" asked Hitchcock, indignantly.

"I mean to keep you out of this car," replied the clerk, roughly. "Hitchcock has given us strict orders to keep all strangers out of these cars."

❧

The Regular Rebate.

Corse Payton, the Brooklyn actor-manager, was sitting in a New York cafe one evening with a party of actor friends, talking—as is his usual custom—in a somewhat loud and oracular tone of voice.

From a table near by came a very young but very self-important-looking college youth who gravely handed Payton a dollar bill.

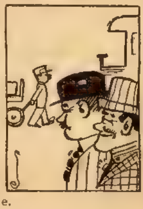
"What's this for?" asked Payton.

"My admission," said the youth. "I always pay to hear an actor perform."

"Thank you," said Payton gravely. Then he tore the bill in two, keeping one piece and handing the other piece back to the gleeful undergraduate. "Children half price!" he said.

❧

Lengthy Stock in Trade.



The late Will McConnell, an advance agent and a Broadway character of much renown, was standing in the baggage room of a railroad station in company with Mel Stoltz, another advance agent. They were waiting to have their trunks checked. Presently a baggage handler passed, pushing a sample trunk, which, according to Stoltz, was about nine feet long and about two feet wide.

"For the love of Mike!" ejaculated Stoltz, "what do you suppose the owner of that trunk sells?"

"I don't know," said McConnell, "but from the shape of that package I'd say bowling alleys."

❧

What He Remembered.

Ollie James, permanent chairman of the Democratic Convention at Baltimore, was seen in the lobby of the Belvedere Hotel in that city one day right in the middle of the tremendous struggle over the nomination. He stopped his huge bulk in the middle of the floor, threw up his hands in a gesture of despair and boomed: "By George. I almost forgot it!"

A dozen reporters were trailing him. What had he forgotten? Certainly it must be something of transcendent importance and the situation was tremendously critical.

James pushed his way through the crowd. He was in a hurry. It evidently was important. A dozen reporters chased after him. James almost ran up to the news-stand. The reporters arrived with him.

"Gee," sighed James, "I'm glad I didn't forget it after all."

The reporters crowded round. Something was coming off—but what?

"Gee," said James again, "it would have been hell if I had forgotten it."

"What is it?" yelled the excited reporters

"Son," said James to the news-stand boy, "gimme a quarter's worth of chewing gum."

❧

Turned the Tables.

A certain critic, renowned for his bitter tongue, found that on occasion even artists will turn. The occasion was a reception at which the artist was exhibiting his latest work.

"I should like to have your opinion of my picture," he said to the critic.

"It's absolutely worthless," the other replied shortly.

"Oh, I know that," pursued the artist, "but it would really interest me very much indeed."

A Counterargument.

General Basil Duke, of Louisville, one of the few surviving brigadiers of the Confederacy and the commander of Morgan's Cavalry following the death of his brother-in-law, General John Morgan, told this story recently at a reunion of the survivors of the Battle of Shiloh.

He said that during one of the Tennessee campaigns Morgan's men surprised and drove back a regiment of Federal troopers. In the midst of the retreat one of the enemy, who was mounted upon a big bay horse, suddenly turned and charged the victorious Confederates full tilt, waving his arm and shrieking like mad as he bore down upon them alone. Respecting such marvelous courage, the Confederates forebore shooting the approaching foe; but when he was right upon them they saw there was a different reason for his foolhardiness.

He was a green recruit. His horse had run away with him—the bit had broken; and, white as a sheet and scared stiff, the luckless youth was being propelled straight at the whooping Kentuckians, begging for mercy as he came.

Jeff Sterritt, a noted wit of the command, stopped the horse and made a willing prisoner of the rider. Sterritt, who had not washed or shaved for days and was a ferocious-looking person, pulled out a big pistol. "I don't know whether to kill you right now," he said, "or wait until the fight is over!"

"Mister," begged the quivering captive, "don't do it at all! I'm a dissipated character—and I ain't prepared to die!"

❧

Brought a Dozen.

Smith the other day went fishing. He caught nothing, so on the way back home he telephoned to his provision dealer to send a dozen bass round to his house.

He got home late himself. His wife said to him on his arrival:

"Well, what luck?"

"Why, splendid luck, of course," he replied. "Didn't the boy bring that dozen bass I gave him?"

Mrs. Smith started. Then she smiled.

"Well, yes, I suppose he did," she said. "There they are."

And she showed poor Smith a dozen bottles of Bass' ale.

❧

The 'Phone and Hymn.

An admiring parishioner of a young divine in an Ohio town recently had a telephone installed in the clergyman's house. The good man was delighted with the convenience, and used it immediately before going to church.

When the time came for him to announce the first hymn, he read the first lines with his usual impressiveness, and concluded with:

"Let us all unite in hymn seven O three."

❧

Exaggerations of Science.

The sanitary scientist was gathering wild flowers in mid-Africa.

"Be careful," they said to him, "lest you meet a lion."

"I would far rather," replied the sanitationist, "meet a lion any day than a mosquito!"

Just a little later he met a lion.

They claim he looked once at the beast and then ran a full-sized Marathon and fell over a cliff a mile high!

Query: What does he do when he meets a mosquito?

❧

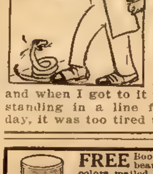
Located.

"Where is the Wild West?"

"Gosh, stranger! Can't you read? In the current magazines; where'd you expect to find it—running around loose?"

❧

A New Version.



"Talking about dry towns, have you ever been in Leavenworth, Kan.?" asked the commercial traveler in the smoking car. "No? Well, that's a dry town for you, all right."

"They can't sell liquor at all there?" asked one of the men.

"Only if you have been bitten by a snake," said the traveler. "They have only one snake in the town, and when I got to it the other day, after standing in a line for nearly half the day, it was too tired to bite."

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The Volcano Prisoners.

(Continued from page sixteen.)

hull of the Happy Ann, we set upon the black men, and after a hard struggle we drove the survivors over the rail and to further flight. We had our ship to ourselves.

"Now, lads," pursued the skipper, "secrecy is out of the question, so get every lantern going and let's finish the raft as soon as possible."

"Beg pardon, sir," said Seth, "but them rascals have knocked our raft into a cocked hat."

"Bad, bad! Well, we will build again. Get to work!"

We got to work, and soon the hammers were going and the parts of the structure getting into place. Mildred and Olive had been advised to go below, but they insisted on staying and holding the lanterns, and from that time they did their part bravely and well.

Meanwhile, all weapons were loaded and made ready for more fighting, if it came. With the deck under our feet we would have been rather cheerful, but when we recalled that we must, of necessity, put to sea on a raft with a gale and an earthquake abroad, I admit we sickened with dread.

We had worked half an hour when we had a reminder that nature had not forgotten us. From Hatharo, the Fiery One, came a deep boom, and the Happy Ann rocked like a cradle. In the strait the water spurted high, leaping at the cliff, only to be flung back in a foaming billow. This was hard to explain, as was the further fact that the lesser island seemed to dip deeper before regaining its former position.

There was another lull, during which the hammers rang blithely as Seth and his assistants forced their work, but a second interruption was coming, and it was quite as dangerous as the first. With the deck bright with lantern-light, everybody was clearly revealed, and nearly all hands grouped. Into that group half a dozen spears suddenly came flying, and it was a wonder death did not keep them company. One of the missiles spat into the main-mast, a second glanced from a water-breaker, and a third barely missed the lantern in Olive's hand. Hideous yells followed the volley, and, looking, we saw natives on the cliff.

"Those fellows have got to be driven from there, Captain Knapp!" I exclaimed.

"Ay," he returned, quickly, "but how will we do it?"

The plan was already in my mind and I gave the clew to him.

"Lead is the driver, sir. They know so little about it that it will speak clearer than anything else. Give me Steve Radd and three or four pistols for each man, and I'll agree to send them pelting away."

"If you have a likely plan I'll go as your mate, myself, but the plan, Tom, the plan!"

I gave it, and then, as Steve pleaded, the skipper consented to stay behind, and my mate and I started alone. Four pistols we each took, after which we dropped over the starboard quarter to conceal our movements from the islanders, and from that point waded into the water until we were immersed to the breast. Skirting the shore we came to the strait, plunged in fully, crossed, and finally gained footing beyond. Next we climbed the cliff and were at its north end. The natives, full twenty in number, were less than forty feet away.

"We're hard aboard," whispered Steve. "We could almost reach out and tickle them in the ribs."

"Just what we are ready to do, but not with our fingers-nails," I returned grimly. "Ready, mate?"

"Ready, Tom!"

"Sure your powder is dry?"

"Plumb sure!"

"Be certain you don't miss once, or we may find ourselves spitted by those knaves. 'Ware their spears! I'll count three, and at the word do you join me in blazing away. Now!"

I counted, and we pulled trigger in chorus It was a lively time on the cliff-top after that. Between us we had eight shots, and though it was awkward to handle four pistols in succession, we did it somehow. It was good hitting we did, too, and as their fellows began to pitch over around them the natives became alarmed. By the second volley some were in flight, and the third added to the fright, while the final weapons found only fleeing man-eaters for our targets. A moment later we were the only persons visible on the cliff.

"Say!" cried Radd, delighted, "that was a slick job!"

"They suffered, but better that than to see them fling their spears through our party. Mildred and Olive will be safer now."

"They are gone, but what are we to do next?"

"Hanged if I've given thought to that!" I admitted.

"They are pretty sure to come back, and we haven't one shot to meet them with, nor ammunition to load up. Why not equip ourselves with their fallen spears?"

The idea was good, and we acted upon it. We knew nothing about the finer use of the weapon, but in a pinch we would be armed. Next we showed ourselves briefly at the edge of the cliff, motioning to let our mates see all was well with us, but we did not dare to shout encouragement. More than anything else we coveted obscurity, and we dropped flat and lay watching them labor on the raft.

"If we can get away we have a small chance to live to be old," remarked Radd. "Unless there is more wind the raft would ride it out all right."

"We can't trust the weather with that jet-black sky away eastward."

"Better the sea, say I, than the cannibals. To be plain an' blunt, Tom, I don't feel easy over these quakin's of the earth. If the ground opens under us it is all over. Hatharo is quiet, though."

"The Fiery One is about as innocent and helpless as we are. No signs of a volcanic eruption, but the earthquake favors nobody. Old Hatharo may suffer."

I looked back at the mountain where we had spent our days of hiding. It was still a black cone, minus its top. It had given us some scares, but these we might have chalked up to another agency if we had known the Fiery One better.

"Hist!" Steve suddenly whispered.

I shifted my attention and, listening, heard a high-pitched female voice some rods away.

"Queen Titicalo!" Radd added. "She's scoldin' her knaves fit to snap a sky-sail from its mast."

"Confound the woman, I fear she is trying to get their courage up for another attack. I'm sure I caught her order that they follow her."

"Serious business! With her to lead they won't be turned away so easy again. Oh! blame the luck, there she comes!"

"Lie low and wait! She is alone, thus far."

Out of the gloom the queen came with long, quick steps. One man, only, followed, and he skulked several rods behind. She had no fear, and she marched straight to the edge of the cliff, pausing within ten yards of us. Then she directed her gaze at the Happy Ann and the party who labored on her deck.

Titicalo was an impressive figure then, and I rather admired her Amazonlike majesty, but I knew she was more dangerous to us than all the ignorant natives who obeyed her will. She took in the scene below with steady eyes, and then, turning, called imperiously. The man who lingered halfway came closer with hesitating steps.

"Speak in English," she directed imperiously. "You must do your part to stir our braves to action. We must slay those sailors."

"Queen," he mumbled, "we shall ourselves all be slain."

"Only a part of us. What of it? We will feast and rejoice later."

"The dead cannot rejoice," he expostulated. "How is it with Olliro? Look! Here is his body at my feet. He died scarce ten minutes ago, and the sailors did it."

"Olliro rebelled against me, and I am glad he is gone. Enough of that. You by your charms and I by my authority must rally our fools again. We will attack at once. Follow! We will lead the attack!"

With this she wheeled and started back to rejoin her man-eaters. At that moment I leaped up and seized her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE EARTHQUAKE.

It had come to me that Titicalo must not be permitted to go to her men and use her arts to rally them. They were frightened, partly by the tremors of the earth and partly by our stout war upon

(Continued on page twenty-two.)

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—Eczema
—Neuralgia
—Headache
—Dizziness
—Nervousness
—Obesity
—Sciatica
—Hot Flashes

The Volcano Prisoners.

(Continued from page twenty.)

them, and reluctant to come near us again. While there was a possibility that the seizure of their queen would stir them into ferocity that would work us destruction, it was my theory that, without their leader, they would be without courage.

When I laid hold upon her I expected fierce resistance, but what happened surprised me. If she started nervously I failed to see signs of it. Instead, she stood passive and turned her gaze upon me.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, almost lightly, "so it is the captain-elect of the ship I shall never own!"

"Ay," was my answer, "'tis I, Titicalo."

"You are in all places at once. I rather wish, sailor, that you would stay here and dwell with us, sharer of my throne. You have brains and wit. Yet, I know it never will be. Well, you have me. What next?"

"In few words, you are not going to your men to lead another attack. You are a prisoner."

"You are too full of energy to suit me, yet—why, I rather like you, sailor! Your prisoner, eh? And what will you do with me?"

"You will remain on this cliff and keep your men away."

"Oh! so you have it all planned for me! For a queen, I am rather voiceless. Obey you? Never! I'll have my men at you in a minute. I will call to them, and they will come. Don't tempt fate. Let me go!"

"To carry out your scheme? Hardly! You stay here."

"You have undertaken what you cannot carry through. Because my followers have weakened once you think they are quelled. I will show you. I have only to raise my voice and cry out——"

Another outcry interrupted. It was a hail off the cliff, and plainly in Captain Knapp's voice.

"I'll see what is wanted," said Steve, and he started for the edge of the headland.

Titicalo dropped her hand lightly on my arm.

"Sailor," said she, and her voice was gentler than I ever heard it before, "I wish it had been possible to float the brig Sunshine. Truly, it would have pleased me to have you for the captain, and if we sailed together I think we might have become a terror of the seas. It is not to be, for the brig is in ashes Sailor, I like you, but—I must go!"

She had me off my guard with her peaceful speech, and at the last word she writhed out of my grasp with one quick motion. Another moment and she was running fleetly toward her men. Chagrined and startled, I was about to pursue when Steve came running.

"Mate," he reported, "the captain says get to the ship at once. A big canoe filled with natives is heaving in sight from above the island, and every fighting man is needed. Come!"

The idea would not leave my mind that Titicalo was a better weapon of defense than anything else, but I had my orders and I could not disobey. Hastening after Radd, I slipped down the cliff as speedily as possible, catching sight of the canoe as I went, and when we had crossed the strait we found our mates scurrying about the deck and making preparations for the fight.

"Glad to see you!" exclaimed the captain, hurriedly. "The pistols! Get them loaded. We have the biggest set-to of all before us now!"

I cast a look to the north and saw the canoe. It was packed with men until there was room for no more, and I saw spears rising above their heads. That was all I wanted, just then, and I handed my pistols to the men who had been selected for refilling them, and sought for other weapons to use when the boarders came. Mildred and Olive were still there, but Knapp grew peremptory in asking them to go below and they went.

"This will settle things for good, my lad," said Seth, as he brandished a topmaul. "The side that wins this heat will be final bosses, an' we are goin' to win!"

He sent a glance at the coming foe as he spoke, and he was stubborn as ever on his spirit of defense, but I caught that in his manner that indicated a doubt. It seemed the trouble was that the water had so deepened just outboard there was danger that a canoe, if driven as long as there was depth to bend the paddles, would sweep clear to our hull. If this happened the gang would be at our elbows, so to speak, and in fine fettle for trying to carry the deck.

There was but little more to be done, and we massed at the bulwarks and waited. It was an ominous situation that faced us, and that area of bodies and spears had force, but we remembered what we had at stake and were strong of heart.

"Now my hearties," cried the skipper, "are you ready?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" we asserted promptly.

"Hold your fire until I give the word, and then don't let a pistol be fired in vain. Every shot must tell."

He was interrupted by a chorus of screeches from the natives, and the volume of the sound gave me a start. Conditions seemed to favor them, and they were riding buoyantly as they dashed our way. They reached what had been the end of the lesser island, but there was no lack of water. Driving steadily they made for the Happy Ann as if on the deep sea. Now they were but two hundred feet away—then one hundred—then their craft rose higher yet, rocking violently, while, suddenly, the whole world seemed swimming before my eyes.

"Another earthquake shock!" cried Seth Styles.

It was that, and the ship pitched under our feet as in a great storm, creaking and straining in hull and aloft, and I barely saved myself from falling. The wave that carried the natives loomed loftier yet, while the barbarians yelled in a different key, this time in terror. They had to deal with a different power than a few sailors, and the peril scattered their war-spirit.

On they came, and it looked for a moment as if they were to be cast upon our deck, but they passed athwart our stern in mad race and were gone. This did not end our troubles. The sea was boiling around us, strange sounds were in the air, the ship tossed as if in agony, and then heeled to starboard and took the billow over her larboard beam. It was frightful, but, suddenly, Seth's voice rose above all other sounds.

"Hurrah! The ship is afloat!"

The fact was staggering, but as my wits were sharpened by the veteran's shout I realized the truth. Water was not only about and beneath the Happy Ann, but she was driving south and already well beyond the lesser island.

"The earthquake has floated the old hooker!" added Seth, boisterously, and as we yelled back I think it was the only time on record where men exulted in time of earthquake. With our lives still at stake we were wild with joy. The ship was in deep water.

For a few minutes our safety was problematical, for the plunging, high-rising seas made us their plaything, and the Ann was going hazardously near the main island, but the quake subsided gradually and the billows fell away a trifle.

While the shock was on it would have been folly to try to control the ship, but as matters improved Captain Knapp's voice rose heartily in the usual deck commands. The chance was offered to get the ship under control, and he did not let it pass. The sails had never been unbent since the tidal wave that began our troubles, and presently we were hurrying up the shrouds to get them on the yards to the desired end.

It was a struggle not easily forgotten, but we had a friend in the bit of a breeze that had sprung up and was blowing offshore, and when the canvas was spread there was finally a shout from the man at the wheel as she "felt" her helm. With her bows to the deep sea the Ann gained steerage-way and began the voyage anew.

It was all so strange as to be amazing to us, but, with Mildred and Olive again on deck, with the sails bellying and the foam running well back of our stern, we first cheered loudly and then broke into ringing song. What mattered it if another shock might yet strike us? The joyful fact remained that the Ann was afloat! We soon had our last view of the island. Night and distance shut it out from our view, and we were every moment drawing farther away.

When we had calmed down somewhat we took heed to other things. After we first went aground we gained the opinion that the Ann had suffered no injury below, but when, two hours after we began our new voyage, we dropped the rod we found eleven inches of water. This meant a leak, and we manned the pumps and soon had the brine flowing to our scuppers.

We were a small crew, but weather favored us and we ignored weariness, and, after a long struggle, brought the ship to her outward port. There we were able to ship all the hands needed, and our homeward journey to New London was free from all difficulties.

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they were picked up by the brig Dover Belle and taken to England, where they reported us dead. Our reappearance put them in such a bad plight that they did not see fit to return to America, which was well rid of them

I never saw the cannibal island again, but from a sailor I heard that Titicalo still ruled, though over a reduced people, many having been drowned in the earthquake, while Hatharo remained a peak with a heart black and cold.

As for myself, as soon as we left the island Captain Knapp advanced me to the office of chief mate, and I held that rating two years in the Happy Ann, when I was appointed captain of the new ship, Whistling Buoy. Possibly it will be no surprise if I add that, on the same day Knapp and Olive were married, Mildred became my wife.

When I made my first voyage as skipper I did not have wholly strange faces around me. Seth, Steve, and others of the old crew were in the forecastle, and we often recalled the adventures of the time when our ship lay aground and we found refuge in the interior of the Fiery One.

The End.

* * *

The Curse of Beauty.

It was none other than Lovely Lucy herself who came over to take our order for the buckwheat cakes and the farm sausage. For weeks our favorite little restaurant had not seemed the same. At first we thought they were putting buckwheat in the buckwheat cakes or adulterating the coffee with Mocha and Java because the high cost of living had sent the price of chickory up so that it was beyond the reach of any but the idle rich.

The manager of the restaurant denied these allegations and said he would cross his heart and hope to die if they were putting any buckwheat in the buckwheat cakes. He put his hand on the picture of Doc Wiley in the last month's magazine and said that their coffee was as pure chickory as you could get in any restaurant in Chicago. So that wasn't it.

Time passed on, and still there was an air of sadness in the little restaurant. Something was wrong. Then we had an inspiration. We decided they were buying their Vermont maple sirup in Vermont and we talked of tipping the thing off to the pure food commission and having the place raided. But the manager said we did the restaurant a cruel wrong to harbor such unjust suspicions and that he bought his maple sirup at the same drug store where he had always bought it.

So we thought and thought, and finally we found out the trouble. Lovely Lucy had gone. Lovely Lucy, the buckwheat queen, had left, and her passing had left a vacancy that the selfest raising buckwheat could not fill. For Lovely Lucy it was who had made the little restaurant so dear to us. Her presence had given the Vermont maple sirup a Vermonter taste and added ambrosia to the coffee.

A prettier girl than Lovely Lucy never said "slaughter in the pan, draw one," to a cook or mopped hash crumbs off a marble top table. For Fate and Peroxide had been very kind to Lovely Lucy and never a woman came into the restaurant that didn't say that Lucy looked at least forty and would have given $10 to know what complexion bleach she used.

But now Lovely Lucy was back and, as it was past the dinner hour and there were only a few people left at the tables, we ordered an entire extra helping of buckwheats so as to engage Lucy in conversation. Why had she left the restaurant, where had she gone, why was she back?

"Say," said Lovely Lucy, "you people are always kidding me about being a good looker. Well, I know I hain't, but I wish I wasn't. It's a curse, that's what it is. Say, believe me, a girl that's got a face like a fried egg—like Maggie Tayters over there—has got a good looking girl beat to a whisper when it comes to getting on in the world"

"Now, you know, Lucy," said old man Slosher, "that you're right there with the looks. And there never was a woman ever lived in the world that wouldn't cut her right arm off to be considered a peach."

"That hain't what I'm talking about," said Lovely Lucy. "What I say is that a pretty girl hain't got no chance. Don't every woman that comes in here with her husband put the muffler on him whenever I go by the table? And don't she hang the Indian sign on the place when she goes out? Jealousy!

"I left here because they wanted me over in one of the big stores on State street for a cloak model. The manager over there was in here once, and he said: 'Say, Lucy, you'll certainly make cloaks look classy when you get into them!' Well, sir, I went over there, and here's what happened: A woman would look at a cloak and think she was going to buy it. She would put it on and parade around before the glass and get dead stuck on herself. Then she'd say she wanted to see it on somebody else and they would ring me in and I would put the cloak on. Believe me, when I got that there garment on I simply showed the other party up. The customer would be so doggoned mad when she saw how different that cloak looked on me than on her that she would just snap out: 'Oh, that isn't what I want at all. Your cloaks are too cheap looking.' Then she'd beat it. They finally got wise to the game over in the store, and they fired me and said they was going to get all their models after that out to the old ladies' home."

"Say, Lucy, you're right," said old man Slosher in a confidential whisper. "Let me put you wise to something. The manager of this here very beanery told me not an hour ago than plain looking girls were the only ones to have around a restaurant because the pretty ones drove away the women customers. He said he hated to do it, but he was going to fire one of the girls here just because she was too good looking."

"My Gawd!" said Lovely Lucy; "here I just get back on th' job, and I'm going to be fired right away. What did I tell you? Didn't I say that beauty was a curse? I wish I had a snub nose and freckles. I'm going to wear a tailor suit or be a suffragetter or something, so the women won't be jealous of me. Hain't it awful! What chance has a pretty girl got, anyhow? I don't want to lose this job."

Lovely Lucy stopped and began to cry. Everybody felt bad. Old Slosher said he wouldn't stand for it. He said it was the allfiredest outrage since the last Armenian massacre. He said the only thing to do was to call the manager over and have it out with him right then and there.

We called the manager over.

"Look here!" roared old Slosher, "You know what you told me this morning?"

The manager was nervous, but he said he knew.

"Well, we hain't going to stand for it! You're going to lose all the trade you got if you fire Lucy."

"Why, I'm not going to fire Lucy," said the manager in surprise. "Maggie Tayters over there is the one I meant. I've fired her already."

We turned to congratulate Lovely Lucy. But Lovely Lucy had torn off her waitress' cap and was trampling it under her feet. And she yanked off her apron without waiting to untie the strings.

"You can't play favorites like this, you dried up shrimp!" said Lovely Lucy to the manager, while her rats and puffs stood straight up on her head, so great was her rage. "You can't pass me by this way. If you're a-firing girls for being good lookers I've got as much right to be fired as that fried-ham soubrette over there has. She needn't think she's got anything on me. You fire me quick or I'll slap your face."

"Say, don't they get your goat?" asked old man Slosher in a husky whisper; "don't they?"

* * *

WHAT'S THE USE?

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* * *

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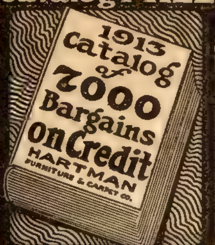

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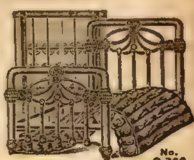

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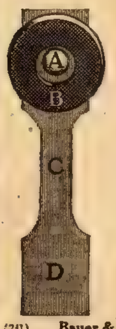

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Our Boys' Corner

Rocky Mountain Perils

Or, THE BOYS WHO WON

By William Ressman Andrews

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CHAPTER VI.

ON THE TRAIL.

THE young scouts and Monkta were talking with Mr. Curley in the room where Lew first saw his scoutmaster on the couch after the fall over the cliff. They talked in suppressed tones, and their faces were very grave.

Hiantha had not been found, and twenty-four hours had elapsed since her disappearance. They had searched the vicinity of the bear episode which had proved almost fatal to their host, but their efforts had been fruitless. Lew had traced her tracks for a short distance, but all signs suddenly ceased. No one could explain the mystery, not even the Indian brother with all his knowledge of woodcraft.

Her footsteps had been traced to the edge of a pond when they suddenly ceased. Every inch of ground around the place was examined by the practiced eyes of those who knew considerable about the woods and tracking.

Finally Lew spoke. "Monkta, I'm going to take Jim and Alf with me to the pond and go over the ground again thoroughly. Would you like to come along? But the bear mauled you so you'd better rest up a day or two more before thinking of taking the trail."

The Indian protested that he was able to accompany them, but Lew knew that he would only be forcing himself to the endurance of a trip that might lead anywhere and require days for its accomplishment. After much persuasion the Indian consented to leave the search in the lad's hands. He felt confident in Lew's ability to do what he set out to do. The boy's first experience with a wild animal and the magnificent way he acquitted himself when a human life was at stake was enough for the redman.

"You heap fine boy; make good Indian", was the way he expressed his admiration of Lew's more than credible behavior in the face of danger.

Off the three lads started. They took one first-aid kit, and traveled in light marching order so that the ground could be covered quickly. Not even a haversack was taken, but enough food in tabloid form to last several days was put in their pockets. Of course each scout was armed with his rifle. Lew felt that firearms would be needed before they returned to the cave.

As he walked along leading the boys through the woods to the memorable scene of Monkta's dreadful encounter, he turned over in his mind the disappearance of the beautiful girl. He knew it was unlikely that she had lost her way in the woods. Who ever heard of an Indian getting lost in the forest or the mountainside. One might expect a city boy to get lost on Broadway. No, he couldn't bring himself to imagine she had wandered off and lost her bearings.

The more he turned the mysterious disappearance over in his thoughts, the more he felt that there was some deviltry at the bottom of it. There was the Comanche chief ever on the watch to make the girl a captive. Lew had seen no signs of hostile Indians in the vicinity, however. But then hostile Indians are generally too clever to let their presence be known.

"What do you think about it?" suddenly asked Jim, as they came in sight of the pond.

There was no reason for keeping his suppositions from his friends.

"It looks as if the Comanche has had a hand in this," Lew replied confidently.

"But how can that be? When we all went over the ground before there were no signs of others near the pond," dissented Jim.

"Perhaps then, but maybe not now," declared Lew mysteriously.

"What are you driving at?" asked Alf, with a puzzled expression. "Make yourself clear, please."

"Wait," said Lew. "I simply got a hunch. Want to investigate something I've been thinking of, to see whether my guess is right or wrong before I say too much."

His companions had to be content with this, and knew it was useless to try to pump their leader when he was in no mood to divulge anything. Not that Lew was a secretive person who delighted in mysterious hints needlessly. On the other hand, he simply wanted to satisfy himself as to the correctness of a theory before saying very much. It would look like ridiculous enthusiasm.

So the boys waited patiently. But they were alive to the fact that they were on the point of learning something which had not occurred to them before. With this feeling the two young fellows watched Lew's movements with deep interest. He walked to a large tree near the edge of the pond. Its foliage was heavy and the ends of the branches almost touched the ground. A person could be hidden in the lower limbs without being easily seen.

"See those," said Lew, in brisk tones. "Footprints none of us saw when we were here before. And notice something else, too." He pointed to the marks of two pairs of moccasins. One was the size of a man's and the other was small, like a woman's.

But that was not all to make his companions give vent to exclamations of surprise. The toes pointed away from the tree, and there were no signs of the persons wearing the moccasins having walked under the tree in the first place.

"Extraordinary. How do you explain it?" cried Jim and Alf.

Lew smiled. "Be patient a few minutes longer," he said, "First, we want to reconnoiter the tree. Probably no one is there now, but let's make sure."

Acting on a sign from their leader the young scouts held their rifles ready for instant use. Lew walked ahead, carefully picking his way. He stooped under the canopy of green, and, with his Winchester in the handiest position for defense, swept the limbs above him with a swift, all-seeing glance. It was deserted, as far as human beings were concerned, though birds flitted in the branches near the top and squirrels and chipmunks scurried up and down the bark.

But there were unmistakable signs o human beings having been under the tree, and recently. On the ground Lew discovered pieces of bark which had scaled off and fallen on the side facing the pond, as somebody climbed hastily into the branches of the tree with a heavy burden.

The young patrol leader swung himself into the tree. He made another discovery. There was a bower of branches covered with green leaves. Its sides were thick, evidently made so to serve as a screen from the eyes of any one that might happen to look up from below. It was put together with so much skill that a person standing on the ground could not distinguish it from the rest of the heavy foliage. A number of branches which had grown horizontally and very close made a natural floor for those seeking its shelter. Indeed, nature had assisted so unwittingly in making this bower deceptive that Lew failed to discover it until he had climbed quite a way and had come right upon it.

Of course, now it was empty. But there were ominous traces of its recent occupants. Leather thongs for binding the wrists and ankles of a prisoner, a curious article that might have belonged to an Indian chief, and a cloth which had been used as a gag were on the floor. Lew hastily descended and showed them to his friends.

"See these," he exclaimed. "You know what they've been used for."

"Yes, indeed," cried Jim, excitedly.

"You're right," stammered Alf, blankly. "Hiantha's been kidnaped!"

Lew nodded gravely. Still his companions were puzzled, and something else had to be made clear to them.

"Why didn't some of us see these footprints the other day?" asked Jim.

"Because they were not made until after everybody left for the cave," answered Lew.

"How did the man get in the tree with his prisoner without some of us seeing him?" was the next question.

"I'll tell you as we move along," said Lew, coming from under the tree. "We

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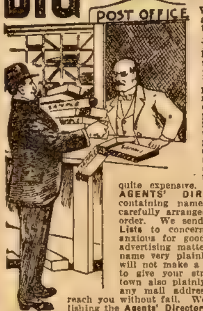

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must take up this trail. There's no time to lose, if we are to overtake the kidnaper before it is too late."

The boys instantly acted on Lew's suggestion to deploy or spread out and examine the ground in regular scout style. After they had moved off and he felt that they were not delaying in any way, he answered the last question.

"You see, the tree and the pond are hidden from the scene of the hunt by two thick groves of poplar and pine. A dense undergrowth of alder bushes and other thick shrubs shut off the view between the ground and the lower branches of the groves. Hiantha for some reason—which doesn't matter in this grave crisis—wandered off to the pond. The moment she got away the kidnaper—who certainly must have been waiting for just such an opportunity—rushed out from his hiding-place and clapped a gag over her mouth. Then he carried her kicking and struggling. But as she could not make any noise, it was no use. Her captor was cunning enough not to go directly to the tree. He approached it from the other side of the pond, taking precaution to wade clear across it to the tree."

"I see how the tricky devil did it, now," said Jim. "He tied Hiantha hand and foot, left her in the bower, waded back through the pond, and carefully covered up his tracks. He wanted to make it appear as if she had drowned or disappeared in some miraculous manner."

The two lads marveled at the ingenuity of the savage responsible for all this eleaborate deception. The explanations left them silent for a few minutes. Finally Alf's face took on a tense expression.

"We must have been shadowed we don't know how long, by Hiantha's captor," he said, in suppressed tones. "The fellow must have overheard our plans for the bear hunt, to know where to be ready to carry out his scheme. Might have picked us off one by one from behind the rocks and trees at any time these last few days."

Lew nodded. There was no questioning the supposition. As the trailers moved along in their search for the missing girl, he made further explanations. He said that judging from a trinket worn only by a certain chieftain, which he found on the floor of the bower with the gag and thongs, Hiantha's captor was probably the Comanche chief himself. Evidently he had become tired of the futile efforts of his braves, and set out alone to find the whereabouts of the girl he loved, to carry her off from under the nose of her vigilant brother. He could have gone in search for her with all his warriors, but that would not do. Too many on the ground would excite suspicion and lessen the chances of discovering her hiding-place. Then he decided, at perhaps a somewhat late day after he had sent so many of his braves in search of her, that more honor would redound to him if he got the girl without the aid of any one else. This was Lew's theory—and after events showed that his deductions were correct.

The three determined lads went for the rest of the day without stopping to cook a meal. A piece of chocolate—which all scouts find very sustaining for forced marches—and a handful of raisins, taken as they moved along, comprised their repasts. When night overtook them they still continued their journey, thanks to a full moon which lit up the trail and made it almost as bright as day. The footprints of the Indian and his captive were plainly visible. The chief had no longer felt it necessary to try to cover them up. He figured on having a good start, and if pursued could now make his escape, as his enemies were far behind he had taken off the girl's bonds so that she could walk and make quicker time.

The boys had traveled half the night, when, in a thicket of Colorado blue spruce trees, they were brought to a sudden stop by a strange noise. A man was running swiftly but softly over a bed of pine needles a dozen yards off to their left. The next instant the man came to a halt, bent over, and then in a stooping position, made a sharp turn in the direction of the spruce trees. A second later he was near the boys in his apparent intention of doubling on his tracks to fool somebody pursuing him. The man was an Indian and unarmed. But one glance at his face was enough for Lew to speak and act like lightning. He recognized the man.

"Stay here, we're friends," whispered Lew, to the astonishment of the other boys, but they said nothing. They realized that Lew always knew what he was about, and would not heedlessly get them in any ticklish situation.

The fugitive came to a standstill. He was as amazed as Jim and Alf at the unexpected greeting from a person he had never seen before. He fastened a penetrating eye on the speaker and saw that the invitation was genuine.

"Ugh, me stay," he grunted. He looked longingly at the weapons in the boys' hands. "Give me," he asked, a note of pleading in his voice. "Bad medicine Indians right behind me—want to kill. Me kill first." Without waiting to hear how his question would be received, he grasped the rifle from the hand of Jim, who was nearest.

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just snatched from the young scout's hand, and fired three shots as fast as he could pull the trigger and work the ejector. A fourth pursuer appeared a moment later, and the rifle rang out again. The man fell to the ground, shot through the heart, as indeed the three others were, Lew found out on making a cursory examination later. The shooting down of the Indian's four pursuers took place so quickly that neither Lew nor the other boys had time to lift a protesting hand.

"Now to get my Hiantha," cried the Indian, dashing off without waiting to say a word to those who had befriended him.

CHAPTER VII.

TREASURE FOR THE SCOUTS.

A wave of uncertain feeling swept over Jim and Alf. Had Lew recognized the Comanche chief and tried to capture him by a trick, only to have the man get away at last? The lads thought in the brief second before Lew had a chance to open his mouth that the Indian's words indicated something of the sort.

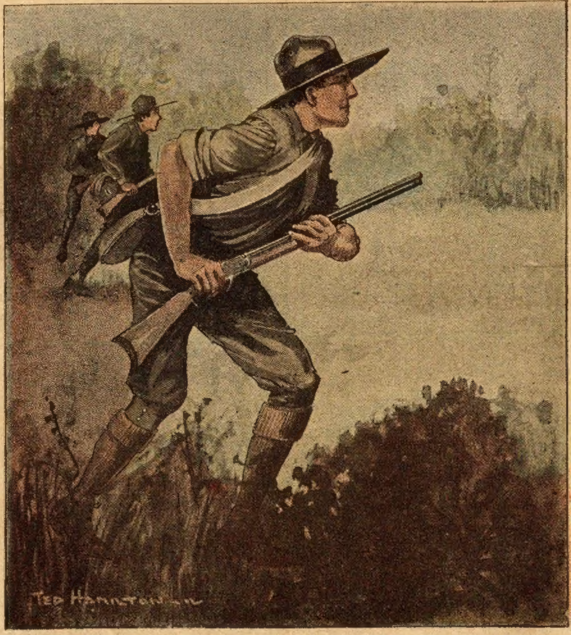
But the moment Lew spoke everything was made clear.

"That's Hiantha's lover," he gasped. "And I'm sure the first man he shot is the chief who has tried all this time to find and kill him and steal his sweetheart."

Lew was right. "Come," he cried, and dashed after the running Indian.

"How did you know him? You never saw him before," said Jim.

"Because he's a dead ringer for Mr. Curley," said the patrol leader. Then the boys remembered why Hiantha had tended the scoutmaster with such unusual care. But in the excitement of the moment they had forgotten how she had spoken of the likeness of the two men.



The young scouts held their rifles ready.

It looked to Jim and Alf as if the chief had brought some of his fellow Comanches instead of coming after the girl alone. But it was discovered later on that Lew had been right in the first instance—the chief came alone to capture the girl. It was merely a coincidence that he had run into some of his tribe, when they were hunting several miles from the pond.

His braves had caught the girl's lover by accident. He, in his never-wearying search for the only girl he loved, had wandered near the hunting camp of his enemies. The young Blackfeet had journeyed afar that day and was very tired at night. Though usually a light sleeper, he failed to waken at the sound of a stealthy footstep. The next moment a Comanche saw—and recognized him. The Comanche lost no time in reverie. He took some thongs from his belt, and had them around the wrists of the tired sleeper before he awoke.

To the surprise of all, a little later the chief came unannounced into their camp. He was as amazed to see them as they were to see him in that place. He had Hiantha with him. They considered him in great luck. He not only had the girl, but her lover, whom he wanted to torture and kill. A stake had been driven in the ground and wood gathered to burn the captive alive.

The chief knew that he was perhaps going a little too far. The moment the Government authorities heard of it, a company of soldiers would be sent in hot pursuit. The day had gone by when the Indians could indulge in massacres and all manner of bloodshed and escape to some inaccessible part of the country. As we said, those days are passed. Now, all the Indians are kept on reservations, and they are not supposed to leave it. But sometimes they do, though only a small number can get away at a time.

That is why the three Blackfeet and the Comanche in this story were roaming about in these days of the twentieth century in localities which, as far as savages are concerned, are as safe for Boy Scouts to travel in as it is for them to ride in the Subway in New York City. But as this is a faithful account of what happened to this particular patrol of the Boy Scouts, it would not do to suppress the Comanche chief's intention to defy the Government by torturing his enemy and burning him at the stake.

The reason you did not read of the outrage in the papers recently, however, was that it did not come off. Hiantha saved her lover from death in this horrible form. She managed in the dark to get away from the tent where she was left under guard of a brave who sat outside the entrance peacefully smoking his pipe. While he was doing that the girl was crawling from under the flap in the rear. She found a hunting knife which some brave had dropped and shoved it under the tent that her lover was confined in. He was fortunate in working his hands around to the knife and severing his bonds in a short time. Then he plunged the sharp blade into the guard sitting outside his tent.

Not until he cleared the camp was his escape discovered. Then the chase began which ended with his running into the three boys. When the young scouts had followed their Indian a mile, he suddenly appeared again. He returned the rifle to its owner and thanked him for its use. He explained that he had picked off all his other enemies but two, and they became so panic-stricken that they ran off to save themselves from his wrath.

Right behind him was Hiantha. The Indian forgot his stoicism and tenderly kissed the girl in their presence. Then he shook hands with the boys, quite as a white man might, and expressed his gratitude to them for saving his life. The boys protested that they hadn't. But Hiantha's lover would not harken to their disclaimer.

"Without the speak-loud pipe I could have done nothing when my foes were armed," he said, solemnly.

Hiantha, her lover, and the three boys made the long journey back to the cave by easy stages. Two days later, all the scouts were in the room listening to Mr. Curley talking to Hiantha, her lover, and Monkta.

"I don't think the boys ought to accept the secret treasure of rubies, sapphires, and other precious stones Lew just found in the vault," he said.

"But he and his friends must take them," protested the girl. "The boys have helped us out of trouble. Then their patrol leader saved my brother from the bear."

"But it seems too much like taking tips," said Mr. Curley. "No true member of the Boy Scouts sells his services."

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"That's right; therefore we can't take the gems," said Lew, who wanted to make it clear that he lived up to the principles of the organization he honored and adorned.

The Indians realized all this. Still they wanted the boys to have the box of precious stones sparkling under the lamp's rays. They really felt that the boys were entitled to them. But how to overcome their objection? Hiantha though deeply a moment. Her face suddenly brightened.

"Listen, white chief," she said, addressing Mr. Curley, in a voice of unmistakable earnestness. "The stones are not ours to give."

"Not yours to give?" echoed the scoutmaster, incredulously.

She shook her beautiful head, and pressed the hand of her lover, who stood beside her.

"That's it," she went on. "The little chief"—pointing toward Lew—"found what we didn't know was in the cave. This cave is not ours more than any one else's. We've simply used it as a refuge. How can a person give what is not his?"

This was true, and Mr. Curley was struck with the logic of her reasoning. He nodded affirmatively.

She determined to clinch her argument. "If these gems had been found outside the cave they would belong to the finder?"

Mr. Curley smiled. "Yes, if no one claimed them," he said.

It was now the girl's turn to smile. "But no one can claim these stones. The real owners have been dead centuries—they belonged to the Cave Dwellers, people who lived in this land before the white man, aye, or the redman came here."

She was right, and her wish prevailed. The precious uncut stones became the property of the Boy Scouts.

And when they went home after Mr. Curley got well enough to travel, and their vacation had come to an end, a city jeweler appraised them for the boys. The stones proved worth so much that it takes my breath away to think of it. Therefore, I dare not tell the exact amount for fear it might also take away yours.

In next week's Ledger another splendid story for boys will begin. It is called "Peter, the Boy Patriot, or Outwitting Cornwallis," a story of war and fighting during the American Revolution. It is by Captain Jack Judson, and will make you sit up and pay attention. Read it sure.

The End.

* * *

A Halloween Story.

Governor Aldrich, at one of the dinners of the Spring Lake Convention, told a Halloween story.

"An ambassador in Washington had arranged—the date happened to be Halloween—to give a dinner party to a body of traveling Siamese noblemen.

"Well, Halloween duly arrived, the dinner was fully prepared, but none of the guests turned up. The ambassador was beside himself.

"Finally, at half-past eight, when all the food was about spoiled, he sent for his butler, a new and rather green hand.

"'Wilkinson,' he said, 'is it possible that none of my guests have arrived?'

"'Not one of 'em, sir,' the butler answered. 'This here ringin' of the bell ye may have heard, sir, has been the work of a lot of cursed Halloween masqueraders, all blackened up and dressed in yallers and reds and silks and satins, fit to kill. A rather superior lot, sir. They come in motors mostly. But, of course, in view of the dinner party, sir, I turned 'em away, for all their protests, in short order.'"

* * *

Chestnuts and Popcorn.

Chestnuts with initials cut in the side with a sharp knife are set to roast. The company is numbered. The first nut that pops belongs to No. 1, and is examined to see what initials it has marked on it. The initials reveal the future fate of No. 1. The second nut which pops reveals the fate of No. 2, and so on. The nuts will have to be watched closely, for sometimes they pop close together.

Popcorn can be tried later. Each one puts into the popper as many kernels as there are years in his life. That is, if Mary is 15 she puts 15 kernels in the popper and holds it for two minutes over the fire, then she removes the popper and takes out the kernels, then some one else tries it. The number of white popped kernels in each one's popper tells in how many years a happy marriage awaits her.

* * *

A Nut Test.

A nut test is tried by seven girls. Each girl makes a long string of acorns, winds it around the same log (a stick of wood) and places that on the fire. When this is done they draw their chairs to the side of the room furthest from the fire and sit in silence until all is burned to ashes. Then they must rake out the ashes of the log without help from any one, saying as they do it:

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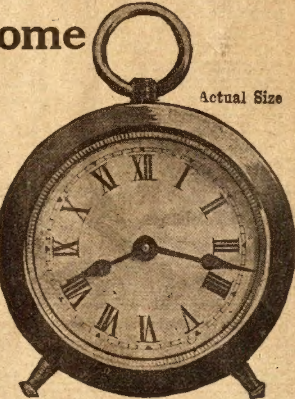

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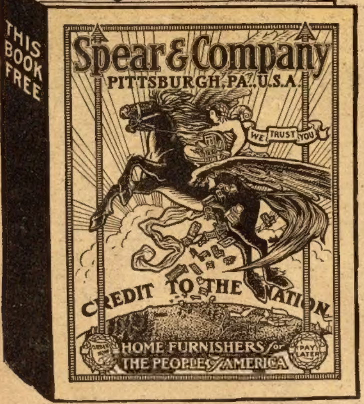


To the Home Lovers of America

Spear of Pittsburgh wants to prove to you, no matter where you live, the wonderful advantages of beautifying your home on his Long Time, Open Account, Easy Credit System. Hundreds of Thousands of Home Lovers from Maine to California now buy their Home Furnishings from the House of Spear. These regular Customers tell their friends and neighbors about **Spear's** High Quality, Low Prices and Wonderfully Liberal Terms, and that is the real reason why **Spear** has built up the Greatest Home Furnishing Business in the World.

But there are still some people—you may be one of them—who do not send to **Spear** of Pittsburgh for their household needs! Many, no doubt, hesitate because they think he is too far away. But this is not true, as you will see, when you understand how simple and easy it is to trade with **Spear**, selecting your goods from his Mammoth Bargain Catalog right in your own home. Wherever you live—North, South, East or West—**Spear** invites you to enjoy all the benefits of the **Spear Credit System.** His catalog contains everything for the home.

Spear Shows Pictures of Everything

It is so easy to trade with **Spear!** Just drop him a postal or mail the Coupon for the Big Spear Catalog. It comes right back in a hurry—Free to you—filled from cover to cover with an amazing array of wonderful bargains for your home—a vastly greater selection than you could probably get in the combined stocks of 100 average furniture stores. **Spear** shows you his wonderful assortment of Carpets, Rugs and Draperies in the colors, patterns and designs from photographs of the original goods. Just sit down quietly at home with your family at your side, if you choose, and select anything you want from this great Exposition of Household Bargains, including everything in

Furniture,
Carpets,
Rugs,
Stoves,
Ranges,
Refrigerators,
Clocks,
Dishes,
Sewing Machines,
Washing Machines,
Lace Curtains,
Portieres,
Mattresses, Bedding,
Springs,
Silverware,
Go-Carts.

Thousands of Spear Bargains

The **Spear System of Home Shopping** is the simplest, most enjoyable, satisfactory and economical way ever invented. **Spear's** Bargain Book shows splendid big pictures—actual likenesses of everything! You don't need to guess—there right before your eyes as plain as day, you can see every article you need for the home, with exact, complete and truthful descriptions that leave nothing to be desired. With the **Spear Catalog** before you, all sense of distance is lost—you feel that you are just as close to the **House of Spear,** as if you were actually to walk into his Mammoth Institution at Pittsburgh.

Spear Word Is Backed By $1,000,000

Remember, **Spear** must live up to every promise! You get it all in "black and white", before goods are shipped, and then if everything is not exactly as **Spear** says, you can return any article at his expense and get your money back. Can you do this with a store? **Spear's** guarantee of satisfaction is good, because it is backed by over $1,000,000 in cash assets and his reputation for fair and square dealing.

Your Credit Is Good With Spear

Spear Says, "Select what you need—pay when you like." Why deny yourself a beautiful home, furnished with every comfort, when the **Spear** System of Credit Shopping makes it so easy for you to have what you like and pay when most convenient?

Use your credit with **Spear.** No matter where you live, his liberal, open account, easy payment plan gives you every possible credit advantage enjoyed by the most favored and well-to-do customer of any city store. **Spear** trusts all honest people, everywhere, regardless of their income. He charges nothing extra for **Spear** credit, either—not a penny—so don't hesitate—just select what you want from the Mammoth **Spear** Bargain Book, paying for it as you please, without interest, and in small payments as convenient.

Spear Prices Are Lowest of Any

While **Spear's** credit terms are the most liberal in the country, yet his prices are the lowest. This is because **Spear** buys goods in such vast quantities that he secures better prices than would be possible to smaller concerns. By extending his business to hundreds of thousands of customers all over the country, he can afford to accept just one small added profit from each sale.

Spear of Pittsburgh allows no store or factory on earth to undersell him.

Those who take advantage of the **Spear** System of Credit Buying not only get the benefit of highest quality but also make an actual saving of from one-third to one-half on every order. That is why **Spear's** Business is growing by such wonderful leaps and bounds.

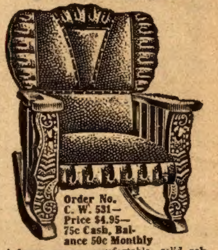
Spear Says—30 Days to Decide

Spear of Pittsburgh will ship anything you select from his wonderful Bargain Catalog on approval. You can keep the goods for a 30 day's home test. Then, if after a whole month you are not fully satisfied, return the goods at **Spear's** expense, and he will refund your money. You see **Spear's** idea is that his home furnishings must sell themselves to you after you have tried them for 30 days. Isn't that about the fairest way in the world to sell goods?

Send Spear YOUR Order Now

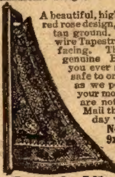
You needn't wait for **Spear's** Catalog. If you want a Rug, Set of Dishes, Go-Cart, Rocker or any of the articles shown on this page, just send **Spear** a trial order right now, and let him prove to you once and for all that no other concern in the country can possibly give you the wonderful values that he can. You have already heard of **Spear,** even though you have never yet done any shopping with him.

Big Rocker Bargain



Order No. C. W. 531—Price $4.95—75c Cash, Balance 50c Monthly

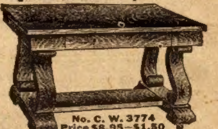
A large, roomy, comfortable, solid oak Rocker with high, wide back, fully tufted and buttoned. Seat is large and roomy, upholstered with high grade black Sylvan leather over full steel springs and beautiful ruffled edge to match back. Construction is solid golden oak throughout, with high gloss golden finish. Wide arms, front posts of handsome design.



A beautiful, high color Brussels Rug, red rose design, with either green or tan ground. Guaranteed full 9-wire Tapestry Brussels with wool facing. This is the greatest genuine Brussels Rug value you ever saw. It is perfectly safe to order direct from this, as we positively will refund your money if on receipt you are not perfectly satisfied. Mail the Coupon below today with $1.50 cash.

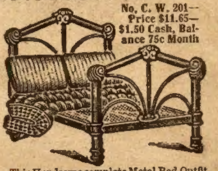
No. C. W. 4602—Size 9x12—Price $11.95—Balance 75c per Month

Spear's Library Table



No. C. W. 3774 Price $8.95—$1.50 Cash—75c a Month

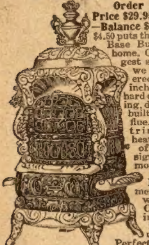
This handsome, Colonial Design Library Table is guaranteed to please you or money back. Large, heavy, 28 x 42 inches; made of American quartered oak, fitted with drawer. Highly glossed finish. A splendid ornament.



No. C. W. 201—Price $11.65—$1.50 Cash, Balance 75c Month

This Handsome complete Metal Bed Outfit, consisting of heavy, perfectly constructed Iron Bed, any color, 4 feet 6 inches wide, a good woven wire spring with coil supports; 50-pound cotton top mattress 2 pillows.

Big Stove Bargain

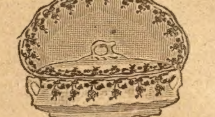


Order No. C-2708—Price $29.95—$4.50 Cash—Balance $2 Per Month.

$4.50 puts this magnificent Base Burner in your home. One of the biggest stove bargains we have ever offered. Stands 60 inches high; burns hard coal; self-feeding, double heating, built with a return flue. Beautifully trimmed with heavy silver nickle of exquisite design. It gives 1/3 more heat with 1/3 less fuel. Tea Kettle attachment for heating water. Pipe Collar connecting double heating flue with up-stairs room. Perfect in every way.

Spear's 55-Piece Dinner Set

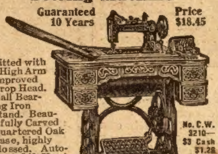
No. C-2930—Price $5.65, 75c Cash, 50c Month



The high quality, exquisite shape, dainty art decorations and low price of this magnificent Dinner Set have made it one of our most popular offerings. Decorations are in pure gold in continuous border effect, wonderfully pleasing and effective. This set is made in our West Virginia Pottery, which is conceded to be the largest, most modern in the world.

"Steinway Special" Sewing Machine

Guaranteed 10 Years **Price $18.45**

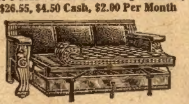


No. C.W. 3210—$3 Cash $1.28 Per Month

Fitted with a High Arm Improved Drop Head. Ball Bearing Iron Stand. Beautifully Carved Quartered Oak Case, highly glossed. Automatic Lift Head—Dust Proof Case. Full equipment of steel attachments and accessories. This High-Class Steinway Special Sewing Machine is guaranteed perfect in material, workmanship and operation. 30 Days' Free Trial.

Wonderful Unifold Davenport

No. C-1521—Price (Including Mattress) $26.55, $4.50 Cash, $2.00 Per Month

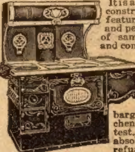


Beyond question the greatest Bed Davenport ever offered by anyone at the price. Two useful articles in one—a full size, comfortable bed and a beautiful, luxurious davenport. Of solid quartered, golden finished oak or northern birch, mahogany finished. Upholstered over full steel coil springs in our celebrated imperial leather. A truly wonderful bargain! Money back if not absolutely satisfactory on a 30 days' free trial.

Spear's Famous New 'Special Plymouth' Range

No. C2601—Price 19.95, Without Reservoir
No. C2600—Price $23.95, With Reservoir
Cash $3.00—$1.50 Per Month

This is the great range that has caused such a sensation as the most amazing bargain ever offered. Easily worth $35. Yet our price is only $23.95 (without reservoir $19.95).



It is a masterpiece in construction. Every feature is complete and perfect. Oven is of same proportions and construction features found in very highest priced ranges. A very small deposit sets this famous bargain in your kitchen for free 30 days test. If it don't give absolute service, we refund your money.

Mail Your Order On This Coupon

SPEAR & CO., Dept. T4, Pittsburgh, Pa.

I enclose herewith $..............to apply as first payment

on...
(Give Name and No. of Article)

I agree to pay balance of $..................at rate of $.................. per month. It is understood that I am to have the privilege of returning the goods at any time within 30 days from date of shipment and you agree to refund the money paid and also freight charges both ways if I am not perfectly satisfied with them.

NAME ....

ADDRESS..

How To Use Spear Coupons

Remember, it will be perfectly safe for you to order any article shown above direct from this announcement, as you have the privilege of returning the goods at any time within 30 days, and your money will be refunded if everything is not perfectly satisfactory. If you wish to order right now, without waiting for Spear's Mammoth Bargain Catalog, just fill out carefully and mail the Order Coupon on left, with remittance for first cash payment by Draft, Money Order or Registered Currency. If you do not wish to order now, but simply want Catalog only, mail Coupon on right.

Spear & Company
Dept. T4
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Mail This Coupon For Catalog

SPEAR & CO., Dept. T4, Pittsburgh, Pa.

I have read about the Wonderful Spear Bargains in Home Furnishings, and I would like to know all about the Spear Open Account, Easy Payment Plan. Please send me your Mammoth Free Catalog, Prices, Terms, etc., without the slightest obligation on my part.

NAME ....

ADDRESS..